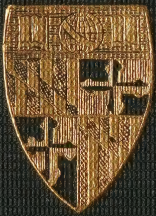

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INDIA'S POLITICAL CRISIS

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INDIA'S POLITICAL CRISIS

BY

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PREFACE

The object of this book is to present a detached, historical account of the events leading up to India's Political Crisis of 1929, and to interpret in an unbiased, non-partisan manner the aspirations of the various political parties as to India's future. To do full justice to these aspirations and the reasons for them, the words of their leading exponents have been accurately quoted and given all the space requisite to an adequate presentation of their respective views. Only upon this basis of past facts and present opinions, the author believes, can a just conclusion be formed as to the source, strength, meaning and possibilities of India's national ideals.

It was the author's original purpose to permit the story alone to speak for itself. But a valued critic of his manuscript has suggested the desirability of a preliminary summary and " balancing " of the various plans and their party sponsors. This task will accordingly be attempted in a brief preface.

It will be seen that the first and overshadowing issue involved is the question of whether India shall strive at once for complete " Independence," or for " Dominion Status ": that is, shall India secede from the British Empire and become a completely independent and sovereign state; or shall it remain within the empire on the basis of a " ministerial government," a national executive responsible to a national legislature, such as Canada and other dominions of the empire enjoy?

The contest on this question began formally in 1921, when the Indian National Congress considered its first resolution for independence and, under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership, rejected it. Three years later, the first Labour Ministry under Ramsay MacDonald, came into power in Great Britain; and, although this ministry proved itself friendly to India in various ways, it gave no indication whatever of favoring independence. Probably, and partly, in consequence of this attitude of its best friends in Great Britain, the National Congress of 1926 voted unanimously for dominion status. The next year, however, the so-called " Simon Commission " was appointed by the British Government to investigate and report recommendations upon India's political problem. But this commission was composed only of members of the British Parliament, and since it was considered by India as entirely non-representative of India's people, it was almost universally boycotted when it took up its labors in India itself. Hence, to forestall what was expected to be a wholly unsatisfactory report from the commission, the National Congress in session at Madras in 1927 voted unanimously for independence and for the preparation of a constitution for India by Indians themselves.

Powerful organizations, including the Liberal Federation and the Muslim League, voted to cooperate with the National Congress in this task of drafting a constitution. A conference of delegates from these three bodies was accordingly held in Delhi, in February, 1928, and voted for " full responsible government," which was designedly held to mean *either* independence *or* dominion status. Immediately thereafter serious differences of opinion flared up on this alternative, and also as to " communal rights and representation," that is, as to the distribution of power between the national and the local governments and as to the proper basis of representation in the national legislature of the religious " blocks " (Hindu, Muslim and Sikh) in the various provinces or districts. Earnest efforts were made in meetings of an " All-Parties Conference," held in March and May, to reconcile these differences.

As a result of these efforts, a Committee of Ten, with Pandit Motilal Nehru as its chairman, labored through the summer of 1928 to draft a constitution acceptable to all parties. This committee's (the " Nehru Committee's ") report was published on the 10th of August. It sketched the broad outlines of a complete constitution and based it upon dominion status; hence it immediately became and continued the object of an animated and nation-wide debate which apparently showed the preponderance of public opinion to be in favor of dominion status. To make assurance doubly sure, another " all-parties conference " was held in Lucknow, during the last three days of August, which adopted the Nehru Report " in principle "; took note of the Independence League's announced purpose not to block the Nehru movement, but to continue to work for complete independence; and provided for the holding of an All-Parties Convention in Calcutta, preliminary to the sessions of the National Congress which was scheduled to be held in that city during the last days of December. Thus it was that the great issue came to be joined in the meetings of those two national Indian assemblies and their respective committees during the ten days from December 22, 1928, to January 2, 1929. In these meetings, voice was given to the plans and policies of the following groups or parties.

First, what might be called the *National Indian* (or *Congress*) *Party*—although its leaders, following unconsciously perhaps Washington's example, strove to stand above or outside of party lines—stood firmly for dominion status against immediate (though possibly for ultimate) independence; for two years' preparation of the Indian and British peoples to agree upon this status; and for a policy of non-violent non-coöperation at the end of the two years, in case dominion status should not be achieved within that time. The leaders of this party were Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Dr. M. A. Ansari, Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar[1] and Mrs. Annie Besant.[2]

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[1] Mr. Iyengar was a leader of the Independence League, but accepted dominion status as the first step.

[2] Mrs. Besant rejected non-violent non-coöperation, and advocated "constitutional agitation." Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, an ex-president of the National Congress, was absent in the United States during the meeting of the congress in Calcutta, but was chosen a member of the Working Committee for 1929.

They were successful in carrying the National Congress with them, by a vote of 1358 to 973 (with 48 delegates not voting), in favor of dominion status and non-violent non-coöperation; but were obliged to yield to the demand that the period of preparation should be reduced from two years to one (from January 1, 1931, to January 1, 1930).

Second, the *Independence League,* whose unconvinced leaders were Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Chandra Bose, and Mr. Satya Murthi. Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, an outstanding leader of the independence party, accepted dominion status as a step toward independence; but the other leaders and the league as a whole stood out until the end for a declaration of complete and immediate independence. They expressed little or no faith in non-violent non-coöperation, also, and preferred to rely upon a threat or show of force to be supplied by the thousands of young men being enrolled in the National Volunteers, of which Mr. Bose was commander-in-chief.

Third, the *National Liberal Federation,* which stood for dominion status, but demanded it " immediately," and regarded it not as the first step, but as the one and only step that should be taken. It was opposed to non-violent non-coöperation, and advocated exclusively " constitutional agitation " as the means of attaining the goal. The Nehru Constitution was acceptable to it " in general," and it was entirely in favor of boycotting the Simon Commission, and vigorously denounced " police and army assaults " upon Indian civilians. Its leaders were Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, Sir Chiman Lal Setalvad and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, the last being a member of the Nehru Committee, and the first one of its coöpted advisers.

Fourth, the *All-India Muslim League,* which was especially strong in Bengal, illustrated the widespread divergence in Muslim opinion. One faction, under the lead of Maulana Mohammed Ali, was strongly in favor of independence. Another faction, under the lead of the Aga Khan (India's official head of Mohammedanism) and Sir Muhammad Shafid, held a conference at Delhi, while the Calcutta conferences were in session, and voted to coöperate with the Simon Commission and to reject the Nehru Report. But the great bulk of the Muslims appeared to be moderates in the sense that they coöperated with the Nehru Committee and the National Congress and accepted dominion status. They were insistent, however, on communal representation, and were alienated from the congress at the end because of its rejection of the Muslim demands on that issue. This moderate party found able leaders in Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Abdul Karim, the Maharajah of Mahmudabad, and Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy.

Opposed to the extreme Muslim demands on communal representation, was an extreme group of Hindus, the *Hindu Maha Sabha,* which resisted all concession to communal representation and demanded that population alone should be its basis.

This party and its leaders, Messrs. M. R. Jayakar and Jitendora Lal Banerjee, went with the great Hindu majority on other questions, and did not press its views on representation.

The *Central Sikh League,* which was especially strong in the Punjab, was led by Sirdars Mehtab and Harnam Singh, and demanded communal representation for their co-religionists. They accepted the decision on dominion status and other questions, however, and one of their leaders, Sirdar Sardul Singh, became a member of the Working Committee of 1929.

The other religious groups, Parsis, Christians, etc., were not insistent on their demands, and were negligible in point of numbers. But the *All-India Workers' and Peasants' Party* and the *All-India Socialist Youth Party* were advocates of either dominion status or independence, according to which promised most for the triumph of socialism or communism in their struggle against the bourgeoisie. Under the leadership of Messrs. Joglekar, R. S. Nimbkar, K. C. Mitter and N. M. Joshi, they presented " a petition in boots " to the Congress and had the satisfaction of hearing strong pronouncements in and from that body in favor of redressing industrial and agrarian evils.

Finally, the *All-India Youth Party* under the leadership of Mr. K. F. Nariman, advocated " Independence now and forever," and called for the recruiting, training and equipment of a great many more volunteers for the potential military support of their elders in the fight for freedom. At the same time, they assured their leaders that they regarded the National Congress as India's " only supreme national authority," and would obey its behests, while continuing to cherish independence as an ultimate ideal.

There is a very strong and perhaps revolutionary " Youth Movement " in India, as throughout the world since the World War. This movement is directed largely against the political schism caused in India by the hostility between the Moslem and the Hindu; and its leaders declare that, with the passing of the elder generation and the dwindling of religion, or ecclesiasticism, in importance, the hereditary hostility between the two religions will be ridiculed out of existence, and all Indians will place India's welfare above all religious strife, which last, indeed, will fall into the limbo of outworn and forgotten things. While the Youth Movement in India is undoubtedly of exceptional strength and promise, time alone can pass on the accuracy of this prophecy.

Another conference of peculiar interest and importance which was held at the same time in Calcutta was the *All-India Women's Social Conference,* which attacked India's social evils with vast enthusiasm, wisdom and determination. The National Congress reflected the work of this conference in its programme of action, which stressed the fight against intoxicating drinks and drugs, untouchability, the segregation and seclusion of women, the abuse and neglect of children, the immorality, disease and poverty of village life. Indeed, this feature of the work accomplished by the congress and conferences at Calcutta in 1928, appears to have been the only one to receive thus far any considerable attention from the British and foreign press.

As to the outcome of that work, it certainly bears splendid promise of fruition on its social side. Its political results are more difficult to prognosticate. In India, there is evidently a far greater degree of unity of purpose and effort than has ever been the case before. Gandhi, Nehru and their associates are laboring with the utmost fearlessness and devotion to unite all India behind their programme of dominion status before January 1, 1930, and non-violent non-coöperation if necessary after that date. This programme, in their opinion, has now a fair chance of success, certainly a far better one than it had when partially tried out before. Should it fail, the solution of violence, that is, of civil war, under the banner of complete independence, will probably be tried. Indeed, it is already freely prophesied that the National Congress at its next session at Lahore, in December, 1929, will scrap dominion status and declare for complete and immediate independence, with the threat of military coercion by the Volunteers. Gandhi's already proclaimed reluctance to accept the presidency of the congress for 1930 and to direct the campaign of non-violent non-coöperation which is due to begin on the first of January in that year,[3] may indicate the strength of the independence movement, as well as the depletion of his own physical strength and the increase of his years.

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[3] Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has now been selected as president of the congress for 1929-30.

Turning to England, the other factor in the problem, we find a strange indifference to, or lack of understanding of, India's political crisis. The parliamentary campaign of 1929 has not included it among the electoral issues, or has permitted unemployment and relations with America utterly to eclipse it in the public mind. The report of the Simon Commission will probably be presented to Parliament at its session in the winter or early next spring. The tenor of that report and its recommendations is being kept as a closely guarded secret; for there is an evident determination that the Indian Problem shall not be permitted to side-track issues which are closer and perhaps more important to England. It would seem probable that the commission's recommendations will be based on the assumption that India shall not be given dominion status, still less independence, until the Indians "are fit to govern themselves." Whether this will be postponed until the Greek kalends, only the logic of events can determine.

Meanwhile, with the gradual trend of public opinion, especially in Great Britain, towards democracy and national self-determination, it is probable that the commission will recommend very considerable advances in India's self-government, without going so far as to advocate an Indian executive wholly responsible to an Indian legislature. But the most interesting, and perhaps the most fateful, conjecture of all is that a Labour Minister under the spell of an exalted statesmanship may extend to India the hand of generous friendship, and concede during 1930 the dominion status so eagerly desired.[4] If so, after that, India may suffer the failures, pain and sorrow, as well as achieve the triumphs, which are everywhere, among all peoples, and in all ages, the inseparable accompaniments of self-government. But it will doubtless be a source of encouragement and inspiration to her as it has been to her sister republics to realize that nations like individuals can learn best by doing.

W. I. H.

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[4] Premier MacDonald has announced the plan of holding a conference in 1930, representative of both peoples and all parties, for a negotiated, rather than a dictated, solution of the Indian Problem. It would appear to be the British plan to demand a solution of the problem of the Indian Princes—and perhaps also that of the Hindu-Muslim controversy—as a prerequisite to the promise of dominion status at any specified date.

The Indian leaders announced that they would not enter the conference without a guarantee that it would set a definite and speedy date for dominion status. Since this guarantee was not forthcoming before the end of 1929, Mr. Gandhi agreed to strive for complete independence, on condition that it should be procured, not by violence, but by non-violent non-coöperation, and that it should be declared, not immediately, but at the discretion of the National Congress Committee. This programme has just been accepted by the Congress at Lahore by an overwhelming (reported) vote of 1,994 to 6. It makes possible further peaceful negotiation with the British Government; but the imminence of violence on a large scale is pressing.

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INDIA'S POLITICAL CRISIS

A Historical Introduction

The nationalist movement in India, which began about a half-century ago, found its center and mainspring in the " Indian National Congress." Like nationalist movements elsewhere, its two chief objectives were union and democracy. Indian historians insist that these were not modern ideas, union having been conceived in very early times for " the land of the seven holy rivers, the land of the holy temples from Kedarnath in the snows to Rameswaram washed by the waves of the ocean "; and democracy having been practised in the village councils. But it would appear that unity was merely a geographical expression, and democracy was on a purely local and non-national scale, like the village moots of the ancient Teutons.

Centuries of internecine strife; the Mohammedan conquest of three centuries ago; the transformation of the English East India Company's " pair of scales into a sceptre "; and the scramble for domination of and by native despots and European invaders in the Eighteenth Century, all checked the normal growth of union and democracy, although they may not have entirely destroyed the pristine ideal of nationalism. Indeed, modern Indian historians partial to this ideal profess to find an impetus given to both union and democracy by the far-sweeping rule of Mogul and Mahratta, by the Mohammedan doctrine of the equality of man, and by the resurgence of the old Hindu ideal of a united and self-governing India from beneath the East India Company's exploitation.

The " Sepoy Rebellion " of 1857, which British historians portray in such dark and repulsive colors, is viewed by Indian students as " the first expression of nascent nationalism," as the united effort of Hindus and Mussulmans to transfer the sceptre from " John Company " to a native monarch at Delhi representing the whole nation. This effort failed of its immediate object; but its indirect result was to replace the Company's rule by that of the Crown, and to procure for India's people a royal proclamation which has been diversely viewed as " a scrap of paper," and as " India's Magna Carta."

The relative ease with which Great Britain suppressed the rebellion and asserted her domination made India's leaders keenly aware of the necessity of acquiring Western education as a means of coping with the modern world and its ways of living. This " milk of the tigress " was craved in the belief that it would impart new energy to an ancient and effete civilization; and it was willingly provided by the Step-mother Country—so Indian commentators say—because it would aid the Crown in subordinating the Company in the minds of India's people.

From whatever motive offered, the new education speedily became a source of social, political and religious revolutions. The denial of race superiority, the sane and humane treatment of widows, the temperance movement, the weakening of caste and temple-worship, a changed attitude towards the " untouchables " and the peasants, were its speedy fruits or blossoms. Leaders in these movements were such men as Keshab Chandra Sen, of the Brahmo Samaj, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar and Pyari Charan Sarkar, who labored for a score of years preceding the founding of the Indian National Congress in 1885.

It was inevitable that the new education and the reforms that started up in its train would soon invade the field of government. The creation of an " intelligensia," the practice of the art of popular agitation, the use of press and platform, of literature and drama, all pointed to and prepared the way for political agitation. The very taste of freedom—at least from John Company's rule—whetted the Indian appetite for more and this appetite was greatly strengthened by the " orgy of repression " in which Lord Lytton, the British Viceroy, indulged in 1876-1879. As in the West, the vehicle or institution of asserting or achieving freedom against tyranny became, as a matter of course or of nature, the national political assembly known as the " Indian National Congress."

The Indian National Congress, 1885-1927

The immediate precursors of the National Congress were the Indian Association of 1876, the

Theosophical national assemblies beginning about 1880, and the National Conference of 1883. The first and last of these were founded by Surendra Nath Banerjee in response to the "gagging laws" of Lord Lytton. They were distinctly an appeal to what England had called its middle class, or what the revolutionists of France had called the bourgeoisie; and they were absorbed into the National Congress when it emerged in 1885. Theosophists from abroad, namely Madame Blavatsky, Colonel Olcott and A. O. Hume, who had themselves fallen under the sway of India's ancient culture, gave another great impulse to the founding of the National Congress. Indeed, one of its annalists frankly accepts Mr. Hume as its founder, although the national assembly which he advocated was designed to discuss only social and non-political questions. So conservative was he, also, that he previously consulted the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, who was so prescient or so reckless as to approve the creation of the congress and the inclusion within its agenda of political questions as well as social. The Indian explanation of his official Lordship's radical advice is, of course, that it was given not in the interest of India's freedom, but to provide the intelligensia with a means of "blowing off steam," and to prevent their political discontent from seeping down into the minds of the illiterate masses.

With such a genesis, the first National Congress was assembled at Bombay, in 1885, followed by the second, third and fourth in successive years at Calcutta, Madras and Allahabad. These meetings were like annual sessions of a debating society, with little or no attempt at nation-wide propaganda. But almost at once British officialdom awakened to its potential peril and substituted opposition for indulgence. Under the stimulus of this opposition, and of the presence of Charles Bradlaugh, that notorious member of " Her Majesty's Opposition " in the British House of Commons, the fifth session of the Congress at Bombay in 1889 entered upon its natural career. Its sessions during the next decade were marked by the inauguration of propaganda in England—through the establishment of a committee, a newspaper (*India*), and a campaign for the election of sympathetic Members of Parliament; by a definite appeal to " Young India " and the peasant millions, who flocked in to take the places of anxious Muslims and disillusioned Zemindars; and by the beginning of annual Industrial Exhibitions, held in connection with the Congress sessions, and of constituent congresses in the Provinces. The sessions of 1897 and 1898 were stirred by the prevalence of plague and famine, and by the news of Mahatma Gandhi's championship of oppressed Indians in South Africa. With 1898, too, came Lord George Curzon as Viceroy, who entered upon a seven years' reign of political reaction. Tempered though it was by historical reconstruction and memorials, by a sympathetic famine policy, and by the repression of too exuberant British soldiers, Curzon's " insane imperialism " (as John

Morley termed his policy) gave great impetus to the demand for self-determination. His destruction of Calcutta's municipal government, and his attempts upon that of Bombay and Madras; his restriction of higher education in the universities; the extravagantly costly " durbar " which he held at Delhi in 1902, in the face of another terrible visitation of famine and pestilence; his partition of Bengal, in order to throw the sop of a predominantly Mohammedan province to the Muslim supporters of the nationalist movement: all gave sharp point to the debates and resolutions of the Congress in its annual sessions. These debates and resolutions were greatly stimulated, also, by such germane events as Gandhi's championship of 100,000 British-Indians in South Africa; the patriotic poems of Rabindra Nath Tagore, and the precepts of Swami Vivekananda; the nationalist song, " Bande Mataram "; the rise of Japan; the spoliation of China, and the potent boycott which the Chinese waged against the foreign despoilers' merchandise.

But seeds of dissension and weakness were sown in the Congress after Cŭrzon's retirement by the introduction of resolutions in favor if *Swadeshi*—the boycott of British goods, courts and schools; and of *Swaraj*—home rule in the form of Dominion Status. A split between the radicals and the moderates, on these questions, occurred in the Congress at Surat, in 1907; and two years later, at Lahore, the number of delegates had dwindled to 243. The Mussulmans, especially, during these years had left the Congress in the lurch. In 1889, they had alone supplied more than 250 delegates; the next year, they retired from the Congress altogether; returning a few years later, they sent more than 300 delegates from Lucknow alone to the Congress of 1899. Curzon's bid to them in that year was successful, and during the next decade they were vociferously hostile to the nationalist movement. Following Lord Minto's policy of repression, in 1907-08, the British government had held out hopes of reform (the Morley-Minto Scheme); and in 1911, George V had in person held out the olive-branch to India, among other things announcing the annulment of the partition of Bengal. Hence, in 1912, when the Congress assembled at Bankipur, the Hindus were lukewarm, the Muslims had not yet returned, and (although the Sikhs now had a grievance against being debarred from Canada) only about 200 delegates were in attendance.

The coming of the World War had a profound influence upon India's political fortunes. When the Congress assembled at Madras in 1914, all India was astir with an effort to aid the Allies in the cause of "making the world safe for democracy." Even Gandhi advocated the extension of this aid in men, money and supplies. To the Congress, came Mrs. Annie Besant, famous as the leader of the Theosophists at Madras, and now entering India's politics for the purpose of bartering India's aid to Great Britain for Home Rule. Her advocacy in the Congress of a Home Rule League helped to knit the union of the radicals and the moderates which the war had begun. The 1915 Congress at Bombay, under the presidency of Lord Sinha, rejoiced over the growing unity of all parties, and declared for Lincoln's " government of the people, by the people and for the people," as illustrated specifically by a " nationalized " Indian army.

Mrs. Besant's great success in developing the Home Rule League, and her temporary internment brought her the honor of the presidency of the Congress held in Bombay in 1917. Gandhi's war-time agreement with General Smuts in relation to the Indian problem in South Africa enabled him to return to India and throw himself again into the activities of the Congress in 1916 and the following years. But again the British Government sowed dissension among the nationalists by issuing Mr. Montagu's promise of increasing self-government in August, 1917, and the Montagu-Chelmsford plan of reform in July, 1918. The Congress of the latter year accordingly saw a division between the moderates, under the leadership of Srinivas Sastri and Mrs. Besant, who desired to accept the plan, and the radicals, who were in a large majority, and who were opposed to its acceptance. When the Congress rejected it, the moderates went into another secession. The Congress, in spite of this defection, was encouraged by Woodrow Wilson's advocacy of self-determination, by Lloyd George's glowing promises of democracy, and by the British Labour Party's endorsement of Home Rule. The head of that party, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, had written in September, 1918: "India now requires robust, independent thought and action. When Sir Subramaniya Iyer flung back his Knighthood at the feet of the Government in consequence of the attack made upon him by Mr. Montagu in the House of Commons, he did a fine thing. It is that spirit which has to awaken India from her subordinate and cringing attitude and spirit, and India sadly needs such an awakening."

But the British government, almost immediately after the Great War ended, reverted to the policy of repression. The Rowlatt Commission's Report on the revolutionaries in Bengal, their acts of violence within India during 1915 and subsequent years, and their bid for Russian Bolshevist aid, was made the basis of the "Rowlatt Bills." These brought out Mr. Gandhi's "Satyagraha Manifesto," which called for a pledge by all Indians to resort to non-violent civil disobedience, and his "Hartal Manifesto," which summoned all India to fasting, prayer and penance. Governmental violence against such leaders as Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Kitchlew and many scores of the rank and file in Amritsar and throughout the Punjab, gave an opportunity for the Congress of 1919 at Amritsar, under the presidency of Motilal Nehru and the leadership of Gandhi and Malaviya, to agree to a trial of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. Some influential leaders, like Chitta Ranjan Das and Lokamanya Tilak, were still unreconciled to this experiment; but " full Responsible Government " was declared to be the logical outcome of the promised reforms.

Continued governmental, or bureaucratic, repression made for a radical policy in the Congress, which succeeded, in its sessions at Calcutta and Nagpur in 1920, in uniting almost all parties behind Gandhi's programme of non-violent non-coöperation. The Mohammedons, under the leadership of the brothers, Muhamad Ali and Shaukat Ali, and stirred to action by the Khilafat Question and the government's imprisonment of their chiefs, gave almost general support to this programme. Mrs. Besant, it is true, continued to oppose it and remained, with some of her followers, outside of the Congress until 1924.

Non-coöperation brought forth the usual crop of governmental penalties and mob violence. A " hartal " proclaimed at the time of the visit of the Prince of Wales, in 1921, resulted in a disgraceful riot in Bombay—for which Gandhi underwent a five days' penance. Punishments and violence continued throughout the year so that, when the Congress met in Gandhi's city of Ahmedabad, 20,000 Indian nationalists were in prison. Mr. C. R. Das, the president-elect of the Congress, was arrested on the eve of his departure from Calcutta to attend its sessions; and many other leaders, including Motilal Nehru, were in jail. Under these circumstances, non-coöperation, was enthusiastically reaffirmed by the Congress, and a call was issued to all Indian men over the age of 18 to join the corps of National Volunteers, and thereby subject themselves to arrest and imprisonment. The first resolution for a declaration of complete Independence was offered at this session, also, by Mr. Hasrat Mohain; but, under Gandhi's influence, it was defeated.

In 1922, Mr. Gandhi continued his vigorous organization of non-violent mass-disobedience, and selected the district of Bardoli for a striking illustration of its working; but another outburst of popular violence at Chauri-Chaura caused him to realize that India was not yet prepared for his policy of civil disobedience without violence, and to call a halt upon that part of his programme, while concentrating on home-spinning, communal unity and social service. His call was not universally responded to, and civil disobedience with violence continued. Lord Reading, the Viceroy, deemed this a suitable opportunity for striking at the ringleader, and had Gandhi arrested and sentenced to six years' imprisonment. The Congress of 1922 at Gaya was therefore held in his absence; but under the presidency of C. R. Das it entered upon an attempt to establish agencies in America and Europe, to organize a Pan-Asiatic Federation, and to enlist 50,000 volunteers. It also reaffirmed civil disobedience; but yielded to Gandhi's presumed desire, and to Mohammedan opposition, by rejecting a proposal to abstain from voting for and accepting membership in municipal councils.

The sessions of 1923 in Delhi and Coconada, under the presidency of Muhammad Ali, adhered to mass disobedience and " Council Entry," as participation in municipal government was called; but it devoted most of its effort towards the prevention of Hindu-Muslim clashes and the promotion of communal unity.

The first Labor Ministry in Great Britain, under Ramsay MacDonald, in 1924, procured the release of Gandhi, who presided over the Congress of that year at Belgaum. But the Labor Ministry did not prove so favorable towards India's national aspirations as had been hoped; hence the policy of Council Entry was vigorously pushed, and many of the councils were captured and municipal government was deadlocked. Continued Hindu-Muslim outbreaks occurred, however, and were not stayed by a fast of three weeks to which Gandhi devoted himself. At the Congress sessions, it was agreed to boycott imported cloth only, and the resolution for Independence, which had been offered yearly since 1921 was again turned down. This moderation brought Mrs. Besant and her adherents back into the Congress, and helped to procure the election of the first Indian woman, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, to the presidency of the Congress of 1925 at Cawnpore. The year 1926 was also marked by bloody Hindu-Moslem riots, chiefly in Bengal; and these nullified the efforts of a committee appointed by an All Parties Conference to draft a constitution which would solve the communal problem.[1] The Congress of that year, held in Gauhati under the presidency of Mr. Srinivas Iyengar, did arrive at an agreement, however, to strive for Home Rule, or Swaraj, on the basis of Dominion Status.

THE ALL PARTIES CONFERENCE AND THE NEHRU COMMITTEE, 1927-28

Fanatical Hindus and Muslims continued to clash with tragic results, throughout the year 1927, and joint conferences of their leaders were only partially successful in solving the underlying cause of the clashes, namely, cow-slaughter by the Muslims, and the playing of music by the Hindus in front of Mohammedan mosques. But the British government again came to the aid of Indian unity by appointing in this year the Statutory Commission for investigation and report on India's political problem. This commission—popularly called the Simon Commission, because of its chairman being Sir John Simon—was made up exclusively of Members of Parliament, *without* Indian representation in its membership.

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[1] This conference was held at Delhi in 1925, with Gandhi as its president. It appointed Mrs. Besant the chairman of the drafting committee.

The news of its constitution—to which even the Labor Party acceded—brought nearly all of India's parties together in an effort to treat the commissioners on their arrival in India to an universal boycott. Even the Liberal Federation, which had stood aloof from the National Congress, came to the boycott platform; and the Moslem League was split in twain by it, the larger section under Mr. Jinnah adopting the boycott, the smaller section under Mr. Shafi deciding for coöperation with the commission.

Under these circumstances, the Congress which met at Madras in 1927, under the presidency of Dr. Ansari, was in a bold and radical mood. It was unanimously agreed to boycott the Simon Commission; and then, to initiate action of its own, two fundamental steps were taken. First, the younger Nehru (Pandit Jawaharlal, Pandit Motilal Nehru's son) moved a resolution that "this congress declares the goal of the Indian people to be complete national independence"; and this motion was unanimously adopted. Then, to meet a British taunt that India did not possess adequate statesmanship of its own to draft a constitution, and—of far greater importance—to forestall the report and recommendations of the Simon Commission by an Indian-made constitution, the Congress authorized its Working Committee "to confer with similar committees to be appointed by the various other political, labour, commercial and communal organisations in the country and to draft a Swaraj Constitution for India on the basis of a Declaration of Rights."

The Liberal Federation and the Muslim League immediately voted to coöperate with the National Congress in the great task of making a constitution, and many other organisations voted to participate. In February, 1928, a conference of representatives of these organisations was held at Delhi—under the eyes and ears of the British government in India—and a 10 days' discussion resulted in an agreement to base the proposed constitution on " full responsible government," thus permitting Dominion Status to be recommended, but with the clear understanding that those who believed in Independence would have the fullest liberty to carry on propaganda and otherwise work for it. By this compromise, the conference belived that it had recognized both the vote of the Madras Congress for independence and the strong determination of other organisations not to go so far.

On its closing day, February 22, 1928, the conference appointed a committee to study the problems of a bicameral or unicameral legislature; the franchise; a declaration of rights; the rights of laborers and peasants; the Indian States. This committee was to present their report to an adjourned meeting of the conference to be held in Delhi two weeks later. When this meeting occurred, it was found that extremists among the Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus had raised difficulties on some of these problems, and the conference—now called the All Parties Conference—adjourned to meet again at Bombay in May. At this meeting, also, it was found impossible to arrive at an agreed solution, especially of the problem of the just representation of the diverse Hindu, Moslem, or other communities, in the new legislature. The conference, therefore, at the end of its day's discussion, referred this problem and all other germane ones to a Committee of Ten.

The Committee of Ten was given as its chairman Pandit Motilal Nehru; hence it is known as the Nehru Committee, and its report as the Nehru Report. The committee's membership was designed to be as fully representative as possible, and the extreme and moderate Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Liberal and Labor points of view were considered in the election of its members.[2] It was hoped that the committee would report to a third meeting of the conference before the first of July. But, although it held 25 sittings and many informal discussions, the two outstanding problems of Independence versus Dominion Status and communal representation delayed the completion of its report until the tenth of August. Its findings were then printed and presented to the president (Dr. M. A. Ansari) and members of the All Parties Conference, which met to consider it, in Lucknow, from the 28th to the 31st of August.

[2] The respective representatives were, for the Muslims: Sir Ali Iman and Mr. Shuaib Qureshi; for the Sikhs, Sardar Mangal Singh; for the Liberals, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapri; for Labor, Mr. N. M. Joshi; for the Hindu Maha Sabha, Messrs. M. S. Aney and M. R. Jayakar; for the Non-Brahmans, Mr. G. R. Pradhan; and as undesignated, Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose and Chairman Nehru.

At this meeting, the constitution outlined and recommended in the Nehru Report was adopted " in principle." The chief problems solved by it were discussed in a most conciliatory spirit, and unanimous consent was given to most of the solutions proposed by it. On the question of Independence versus Dominion Status, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on behalf of himself and some other Independence members declared that they would not " obstruct or hamper the work of this Conference," that they would not " take any part in this resolution by moving amendments or by voting for it," but that they desired to dissociate themselves from it " in so far as it commits us to Dominion Status," and that they proposed " to carry on such activity as we consider proper and necessary in favour of complete Independence." The resolution referred to had been offered by Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, and ran as follows:

" Without restricting the liberty of action of those political parties whose goal is complete independence, this Conference declares: (1) That the form of government to be established in India should be responsible, that is to say, a government in which the executive should be responsible to a popularly elected legislature possessing full and plenary powers; (2) that such form of government shall in no event be lower than that of any self-governing dominion." After discussion *pro* and *contra,* by a round dozen of debaters, and after Jawaharlal Nehru's declaration, the resolution was " put to the vote and carried *nem con* with acclamation.

A similar happy compromise was arrived at on the vexed question of communal representation, and some others; and the president of the Conference expressed the general feeling among its members and the public at large by declaring that " the chairman and members of the Nehru Committee had applied themselves with noble and single-minded devotion to this epoch-making work." Continuing he said:

" India has gone through many and varied phases of the struggle for liberty; but never in the chequered history of this country's fight for freedom had representatives of all schools of political thought assembled together to draw up a definite scheme of our constitution. That has now been done by the committee. It is in itself a historic event; and when we see the background of the dark events of the last few years, resulting in spasmodic and ineffective attempts to introduce some light into the darkness of the wilderness of confused aims and objects in which we had lost ourselves, and of complacent challenges that were being thrown at us both from within the country and beyond the seven seas, I need hardly tell you that this report becomes a doubly historic event."

Before the conference adjourned it took steps to carry the plan of work further by adopting the following resolution:

" This Conference resolves to reappoint the Nehru Committee with power to co-opt, and authorises it to select and instruct a Parliamentary draftsman to put the constitution outlined and recommended by it as accepted by this Conference, with all necessary ancillary and consequential provisions, in the shape of a bill to be placed before a Convention of the representatives of all political, commercial, labour and other organisations in the country present at this Conference and others of not less than two years' standing, provided that nothing will be added or altered which is inconsistent with the agreements and decisions arrived at by this Conference. The Committee shall take all necessary steps for the holding of the said Convention on such date as may be fixed by it.''

The All Parties Convention, 1928

It was by virtue of this resolution that there came into existence the All Parties Convention of December 22 to 31, 1928, which was held at Calcutta.[3]

The work of the Convention and the Convention itself were practically absorbed by the Indian Na-

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[3] Its meetings occurred as follows:

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December 22:	The Chairman's Address (Mr. Sen Gupta's)......	21
	The President's Address (Dr. Ansari's)........	22
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tional Congress and its Committees, whose meetings occurred December 22 to January 2.[4]

THE ALL PARTIES CONVENTION, DECEMBER 22

The Bolshevists of Russia, the Fascists of Italy, and the Kuomintang of China have illustrated the method of securing a basis for (at least temporary) government by enthroning a political party. The political parties of India, also, as has been seen above, decided to form a federation of all parties as a basis for their new government: hence the All Parties Convention, which met in Calcutta. Its meeting-place was in Park Circus, in a tent erected in the great " pandal," or park, which had been prepared for the meetings of the Indian National Congress. The first session of the Congress was to occur on the 29th of December; and the Convention of the Parties was to blaze the trail for the Congress, which, it was expected, would adopt the Convention's recommendations on the Nehru Report.

Not all of the parties had sent representatives in previous years to the National Congress; but it was hoped that the Convention of 1928 would be representative of *all* of them. A serious split among the parties had occurred in 1916, because of different views as to India's proper part in the World War; and the Convention of 1928 was much more representative of the parties than any other national assembly during the intervening dozen years. The two chief religions (Hindu and Moslem), Liberals, Laborites, leading Indian newspapers, champions of States' Rights, Radicals, Moderates and Conservatives, were all well represented among the delegates.

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[4] See *infra*, p. 61.

When the Convention's first session was held, on December 22, three of the leading bodies of Mohammedans had not yet appointed delegates, because of a difference of opinion in their own ranks as to the Nehru Report. Some of the delegates from distant places, also, had not yet arrived. Hence the first session was not very large, and it lasted for only three-quarters of an hour. It sensed, however, the imminence of a grave crisis in India's political affairs, and a feeling of responsibility sobered those present.

THE CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS

The Chairman of the Reception Committee, J. M. Sen Gupta, of Calcutta, welcomed the delegates whom he declared to include "the very finest men that our country has produced: men who have fought many a battle; who have never shirked the call of duty; and who have made their country's cause the be-all and end-all of their existence." He recalled the part taken by Bengal and its martyred heroes in the struggle for freedom; referred to the recently fallen leader, Lala Lajpat Rai, "the Lion of the Punjab"; repudiated the Simon Commission, appointed by the British government to solve India's political problem, without giving India representation upon it; made an appeal for unity, although he denied that unanimity was, or ever had been, necessary in popular revolutions; and plead for the adoption of the Nehru Report as the basis of the new constitution, to which, he claimed, the great masses of the Indian people had already given their approval.

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

Dr. M. A. Ansari, the President of the Convention, then gave his presidential address, which he began by recalling the recent martyrdom of Lala Lajpat Rai, and then took up at once a discussion and advocacy of the Nehru Report. " I do not suggest that the country found the draft to be perfect in every respect. It is not so; and it does not claim to be the last word on the Indian constitution for all time. As the distinguished authors themselves have pointed out, the proposed constitution is nothing more, but it is also nothing less, than the greatest common factor of agreement among the well-recognized political parties of India; and it is to be viewed, not as a remote stage of our evolution, but as the next immediate step."

Dr. Ansari then took up the two questions upon which both the Convention and the subsequent Congress were to be nearly ship-wrecked, namely: Shall Dominion Status within the British Empire, or complete Independence, be our next step? And, how shall representation in the new government conserve the rights of minorities in the respective communities?

As to the first question, he said: " The Nehru Committee draft, although it deals, as it must have dealt by virtue of the very *raison d'être* of the Committee, with the minimum [Dominion Status], it has not deprived any body of persons from working for the maximum [Independence]. That is why I at any rate, as a member of the Indian National Congress owing allegiance to its goal of complete national independence, am prepared to give my support to the recommendations. I welcome the minimum in the first place because my own ideal is not thereby lowered, and, secondly, because by doing so I am helping to secure united backing for sanctions that may be devised in order that India may win her freedom."

On the conservation of the rights of minorities—especially of the Mohammedans, who constitute the most important minority in India—he said: " The draft constitution, I will venture to say, gives to the minorities of India more real and solid safeguards than have been granted by the League of Nations to the racial minorities of any of the newly constituted States of Europe. But let us not be the victims of a constitutional fetish. ' The true safeguard of a minority,' as a committee of the League of Nations has recently observed, ' is the goodwill of the majority.' It is not on the privileges that a minority has succeeded in wringing from the majority, but on its patriotism, public spirit and devotion to the country that its status and welfare depend.

" Nor must I fail to add a word of warning. Constitutional safeguards are bounties on inefficiency; the more a minority has of them, the more will it need; and, protected from the bracing spirit of free competition by charitable provisions of the constitution, it will sink deeper and deeper into ignorance, fanaticism and sloth, to be stifled ultimately by the very guards which had appeared to offer it partial support. . . . . In our loyalty to our group or community, let us not forget that we owe a higher allegiance to our country as a whole."

It was in these frank and drastic words that Dr. Ansari appealed to the Mohammedans and other minorities in India to remember that they were not only sectaries—the representatives of religions and territorial districts—but primarily Indians: just as, in Philadelphia a hundred and forty years before, another chairman of a Constitutional Convention and his colleagues appealed to their fellow-countrymen to " think Continentally," to remember that they were Americans, as well as Carolinians, Virginians, Pennsylvanians and New Englanders.

Having raised these two fundamental questions, Dr. Ansari pointed to the gravity of the crisis with which they had confronted the Convention. " If we fail," he said, " we wreck the constitution, and the whole world, which is watching us today, will consider us bankrupt in statesmanship, imagination and earnestness of purpose; and we shall have richly deserved their opinion. But the seriousness of the consequences will not be limited to the exposure of our own worthlessness. They are fraught with danger to the nation itself. Rightly or wrongly, Providence has put us who have assembled here in such a position that a false step will spell untold sufferings to the country, and a right step will lay the foundation of our freedom.'' Again we are reminded of that other crisis in 1787 when—if Gouverneur Morris be correct—Washington made his memorable appeal on the threshold of the Philadelphia Convention for unity and patriotism.

Finally, having frankly stated the ominous crisis before them, Dr. Ansari (like Washington before him) painted for his colleagues a brighter future. '' After several years of utter darkness,'' he said, '' characterised by the utmost confusion of aims and objects, a darkness in which the spectre of communal differences oppressed us like a terrible nightmare [5]—the work of the Nehru Committee has at last heralded the dawn of a brighter day. You have critics and opponents to the right and to the left, an alien government that attempts to prolong its power by overemphasizing and encouraging our religious differences, and a set of communalistic groups who, inspired by the gospel of mere bread and butter, are prepared to degrade themselves by pandering to the behests of our alien rulers. But let us not exaggerate the importance of their subservient and cliquish wire-pulling. It is on the decision of the National Convention alone that the future of India depends. With our hands here and now we shall plant a sacred tree.[6] We have no reason to be afraid of communalists. Their days are numbered. Already a new generation is coming to the front to which differences between Hindus and Mussulmans are unknown, and which will not and cannot think in communal terms.

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[5] These words, and those in the next sentence, are keenly reminiscent of 1781 to 1788, the " critical period " in our own history, when our Union and Constitution were threatened by similar foes.

"Our angle of vision has rapidly changed. Let us in recognition of this supremely important fact bury our communal differences so deep beneath the earth that they may never rise again. And when this preliminary work has been done, we can proceed to lay the foundations of that democratic edifice within which the people of India can live and prosper for ages to come."

THE NEHRU REPORT

Following this presidential address, which was received in good spirit and with generous applause, the Nehru Report was presented to the Convention by its chief author, Pandit Motilal Nehru. Pandit Nehru was the president-elect of the National Congress, and as such had been received on his arrival in Calcutta the day before the Convention met by vast popular acclaim. He was met at the railway station by an immense procession representing the volunteer cavalry, infantry and artillery, the many religious and political societies which were about to hold their annual conferences in the city, and the great cheering populace itself. Seated in a carriage drawn by 34 white horses, he was escorted through the streets to the pandal in which the meetings of the Congress were to occur and throughout the sessions he was surrounded by volunteer guards. This exaltation and homage were partly due to the shrewd desire on the part of the leaders to impress their followers, and probably also the British government, with the importance of the political events about to transpire. As Washington and his advisers deliberately surrounded the new American Republic and its first chief executive by much of the " sanctity that doth hedge a king," so Nehru subordinated his usual democratic simplicity to the opportunity of making a spectacular appeal to the pomp-loving multitude in behalf of the new constitution that was about to be launched.[7]

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[6] Cf. the "Liberty Trees" and "Liberty Boys" of our Revolutionary period.

When he arose to present the draft of this constitution to the Convention, he went directly to the core of his committee's report, admitting frankly that no one considered it a counsel of perfection, but stating that in the light of all the varied rights and interests to be considered he viewed it as the one best calculated to win united support. He begged the delegates to consider it, not only in its isolated parts, but as an organic whole. ‘‘ You are perfectly at liberty to scrap the whole of it,’’ he concluded, ‘‘ provided you find an alternative; but if you cannot find any alternative, ... if nothing better can be discovered, I beg of you to accept it.’’

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[7] As was the case with Washington, Nehru did not escape a flood of hostile criticism and ridicule for this; see, inter alia, *The Statesman*, Calcutta, for January 5, 1929.

The discussion of the report was deferred until a later session and, after the president had announced the procedure connected with the proposal and adoption of amendments, the first session of the Convention adjourned. Immediately, a stream of amendments began to flow in to the secretariat. Nearly all of these centered around the two vital questions of independence and communalism.

As to communalism, it was attempted, on the one hand, to eliminate from the constitution all traces of it by discarding every provision for the special representation of communities, ‘‘ whether in minority or in majority ’’; and on the other hand, to protect by a number of ingenious devices the rights of particular minorities, provinces, and States.

The question of independence speedily eclipsed that of communalism, however, and became the crux of both Convention and Congress. One party, the Independence Leaguers, lined up in favor of a declaration of complete and immediate Independence;

a second supported the Nehru Report's recommendation of Dominion Status; and a third tried to straddle the issue by saying that the " aim of the political parties is the attainment of full responsible government without specifying the nature of the relationship with the British Government, leaving that to be determined in the future." Since this third stand was simply that of indefinite and indecisive postponement, it was soon forsaken, and the struggle centered upon Dominion Status versus Independence. It became evident that this struggle would be carried through both the Convention and the Congress; and while the Convention was still in session, and a week before the Congress met, the Working Committee of the Congress grappled with the problem, while the leading men both within and outside the various organisations entered upon a series of prolonged and fervent discussions of it.

MAHATMA GANDHI

On Sunday morning, the 23rd, before the Convention held its second session, Mahatma Gandhi arrived in Calcutta. Since he held no special official position in either the Convention or the Congress, he tried to arrive unheralded and unwelcomed. But the time of his arrival was discovered, and a great crowd of people thronged to the railway station, found him with a few friends in a third-class compartment, and gave him an immense ovation. Thousands of his admirers were intent on placing their own garlands of flowers around his neck, in addition to those of the official reception committee, and it was a full quarter of an hour before he could descend from the train. He and Mrs. Gandhi, who accompanied him, had planned to take very modest lodgings in Calcutta; but the leaders, who at once recognized his pivotal importance, insisted upon his living near them in the very large and comfortable house of one of his friends.

During several years, the world had been told that Gandhi had undergone a total eclipse and had ceased to be of any real importance as a political factor. But from the moment of his arrival in Calcutta it was plain that he was not only a political star of the first magnitude, but that he was by far the dominant political and moral factor in both Convention and Congress. Indeed, it was agreed on all sides that the Calcutta Congress of 1928 will be memorable, if for nothing else, for giving Mahatma Gandhi back to the political leadership of India.

A typical editorial of welcome to him appeared in the Calcutta *Basumati,* on the morning of the 24th, under the caption, " Mahatmaji[8] is in our Midst," and proceeded to hail him as " a mentor and guide." " It is a critical moment in the history of the Congress," it declared, " and there is nobody else in India who can give it the proper lead and supply the necessary inspiration. The greatest name in modern politics, Mahatmaji is preëminently fitted to fill that rôle. . . . . In the world, but not of it today, the sage of Sabarmati is still a power in the land. It is not in every country that a Gandhi is born. Men of his type are epoch-making; and will anybody dare question his title to be the maker of the epoch that has dawned on India? Welcome—thrice welcome to thee, the gifted seer and sage of modern India.''

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[8] The suffix *ji* is used as a term of affectionate respect, in such forms as Gandhiji, Panditji (applied to Pandit Motilal Nehru and others), Lalaji (Lala Lajpat Rai), etc.

DOMINION STATUS VERSUS INDEPENDENCE

The Convention assembled for its second session on Sunday morning, soon after Gandhi's arrival in the city. He attended the session and was given another ovation by the delegates, but took no part in the debate, to which he listened with concentrated interest. The debate was on the Dominion Status versus Independence issue, and was a prolonged and animated one lasting for five hours. It was opened by Mr. Sen Gupta, the political leader of Bengal, who moved a resolution declaring that '' India shall have the same constitutional status in the comity of nations known as the British Empire as [that of] the Dominion of Canada, the Commonwealth of Australia, the Dominion of New Zealand, the Union of South Africa and the Irish Free State, with a Parliament having power to make laws for the peace, order and Government of India, and an executive responsible to that Parliament, and shall be styled and known as the Commonwealth of India.''

This resolution Sen Gupta supported for the reasons that it would be a platform on which all could unite against the British Government's latest tool, the Simon Commission, for keeping India dependent; that it would hamper no one in his fight for complete independence, but would itself be a step towards that goal; and that it was a practical compromise, also, between those who were out for a Socialistic Republic, and those who would accept even less than Dominion Status.

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Yakub Hossain (or Hassan) of Madras, who argued that it would make possible a constitutional fight against Britain, instead of the struggle in arms which a declaration of independence would necessitate; that independence would not be whole-heartedly supported either by those Muslims who fear the Hindu rule in India, or by those Hindus who fear Muslim domination from outside; and that dominion status would mean equality for India with the British Empire, and would give to the 300,000,000 Indians an even greater control of that Empire than the 40,000,000 British themselves would possess.

The Independence League had sensed the coming struggle in the Convention, and had hastily called its available members together for consultation, both on Saturday evening and on Sunday morning. As a result of their consultation, it was decided that a statement from it should be read in the Convention at its second session. The Independence leader, Mr.

Srinivasa Iyengar, accordingly followed Mr. Hassan by reading the statement, which had been signed by many members of the Convention and Congress, and which declared that Independence alone, and not Dominion Status, was the acceptable basis for India's constitution, and that the signers of the statement would take no part in the framing of the constitution in so far as Dominion Status was concerned.

The opposition next took the form of a statement by Mr. Daud, President of the Trades Union Congress, that he had been sent as a delegate to the Convention to demand that it should stand for a Socialistic Republic and the nationalization of all industry. This statement was challenged by Rai Sahib Chandika Prasad, ex-president of the Trades Union Congress and of the Railwaymen's Federation, who asserted that the majority of the Congress and of the Trades Unionists were in favor of the Nehru Report. The labour delegates in the Convention thereupon shouted that Mr. Prasad had no authority to speak for the Trades Union Congress, and he was obliged to admit that he spoke only on his personal responsibility.[9]

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[9] The official head of the delegation from the Trades Union Congress, Mr. Dewan Chamanlal, sent to Mr. Nehru a telegram dated Lahore, December 24, as follows: "The Trades Union Congress did me honour in selecting me to present the document comprising its case before the Convention. Regret absence. Delegates are instructed not to disturb harmony of your deliberations by participating in discussions as issues raised by the Congress [of the Trades Union] are fundamental and uncompromising."

The next attack upon the resolution for Dominion Status came from a Muslim leader, Maulana Mahomed Ali, whose speech was interrupted by continual heckling, but who steadily refused to comply with the insistent demand to " withdraw " either his words or his presence. He began by imputing cowardice and defeatism to those who really desired Independence, but were willing to accept Dominion Status. After the storm which greeted this charge had subsided, he declared that Dominion Status might be all very well on paper, but that when it was being applied there would be a world of difference between the people of Canada or South Africa and those of India; that he had learned from his recent experiences in England, the equality claimed for Dominion Status could have application only in a country of white people, and not in a country of 320,000,000 dark people. " Nowhere in the world," he said, " is any Asiatic, particularly an Indian, more looked down upon than in Britian, the center of the British Empire." There was, consequently, only one article which he desired in a constitution, namely, " that India shall be free and independent. I don't ask for Dominion Status under the British, nor under Hindus, nor under Mussulmans, nor under Turkey or Afghanistan; but I want *freedom* for myself and my country." He declared that Mr. Sen Gupta's psychology was expressed in the old adage, " he who fights and runs away, lives to fight another day," and that Mr. Sen Gupta believed it better to be a coward for five minutes than to be a dead man all one's life; but as for himself, he would prefer to be a dead man than to be a coward.

This speech, so reminiscent of the " give me liberty or give me death," and " sink or swim, survive or perish " speeches of Patrick Henry and John Adams in the American crisis of 1776, brought forth a sharp reply from Dr. Alum of Lahore, who said that he too was for Independence; but, he demanded, what practical scheme for Independence has Mahomed Ali to offer? Dominion Status, on the other hand, was neither compulsory nor permanent; it was simply the last offer to the British Government to behave better; and the last offer on the part of those Indians who believed that the English people were sympathetic with them.

Independence as the only goal to work for received its next support from Mr. S. Satyamurti, an exile from a South Indian native state and representative of the subjects of that and other native states. Dominion Status, he argued, would mean perpetual subjection because, if Indians were slaves, the subjects of Indian States were slaves of slaves.[10]

Dr. Annie Besant of Madras, well-known in both philosophical and political circles, next attempted to bring the two sections together by asserting that Dominion Status and Independence are for all practical purposes one and the same thing; for example, the various Dominions could have independence any day they chose, but preferred to remain within the Empire and enjoy the protection of the British navy. The important thing for mighty India, as it had been for little Ireland, she declared, was not to pass resolutions for Dominion Status or Independence, but to prove a will to be free by setting up a government paralleling that of the British in every village, district and province. As for the bogey of communalism, she feared it not; because it is entirely absent among college students, and is to be found only among elderly people. An Indian army and navy, she deemed to be necessary, because England would grant India freedom only when she considers it more dangerous to refuse than to grant it; and because, even if England cleared out tomorrow, without an army and navy India would fall under the rule of some other Asiatic power.

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[10] A series of resolutions on Independence and representation offered by Mr. Satyamurti, were published in *The Basumati,* December 24, 1928.

Professor Jitendra Lal Banerjee added his effort to bridge the gulf by declaring that Dominion Status and Independence were equally " impractical," and moved an amendment simply defining India's ideal to be that of " a free nation among the free nations of the world." This too, like both Independence and Dominion Status, would mean a resort to violence and suffering. " Your decision," he said, " would not be an act of the moment, but one which will affect you, affect your descendants, and posterity for generations to come. For you the choice is plain, and it remains to be seen what course you will adopt, the straight and narrow and short path that leads to independence through much blood, many tears and innumerable courses of suffering, or the broad, beaten track that leads to dominion status, dependence and hell.''

Mr. Bepin Chandra Pal of Calcutta, in advocating Dominion Status as against Independence, reminded the Convention that '' Independence '' is a foreign word, while the true Indian word is '' Sadhinata,'' which means self-dependence, and not the mere absence of dependence. Dominion Status, he argued, would mean self-dependence for India, as well as an equality of partnership in a larger association of self-governing states.

Next, another Socialist voice was heard, that of Mr. Tarachand J. Lalawani of Karachi, who declared that '' India cannot achieve true freedom without the severance of the British connexion, and the people cannot enjoy the fruits of freedom without Socialism.'' He demanded '' direct action,'' instead of resolutions, and asserted that it was the peasants of India and nobody else who could achieve Swaraj.

This brought a Liberal leader to his feet, Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Iyer [Aiyer], who said on behalf of the National Liberal Federation that '' Dominion Status is enough for any self-respecting nation, since it means association on equal terms with the biggest nations of the world.'' He deprecated heroics, and replied to a question as to whether or not Liberals would kill and get killed or go to jail in the coming struggle, by saying: " We Liberals are commonplace men; but give us a chance to work with you, and enable us to give the best in us to the advancement of the national cause in a spirit of mutual trust and toleration."

Another Socialist of Karachi, Swami Govindanand [Gobindananda], endeavored to bring the Convention to a two-fold radical position by asserting on behalf of the Conference of Political Sufferers (the Sadhin Bharat Sanga) that Dominion Status would simply mean the continued control of India by British Imperialism, and that true independence could be achieved only on the basis of Socialism. This brought out a defense of Dominion Status by Mr. Amrit Lal of Kathiawar and Mr. Ranchoredas Gandhi, the latter announcing that three conferences in the native Indian States had unanimously approved the Nehru Report.

Another representative of the Liberal Federation, Mr. C. Y. Chintamoni, in a much-applauded speech, seconded his Liberal colleague's appeal for unity on Dominion Status and the tolerant coöperation of all parties. He replied to Mahomed Ali's charge of " defeatism " in such a conciliatory spirit that Ali's threatened secession from the Convention was averted, for the time at least. He reminded his hearers of " the strength, organisation and selfishness " of their common foes, and attributed to disunity India's weakness; and he declared that " the Convention having been held, it would be the greatest disaster for it to break up without reaching agreed conclusions. . . . . The members of this Convention will be answerable for having done to India the gravest and most incalculable injury that any body of public men have done within public memory.'' Mr. Hari Sarbottam Rai added, to this appeal to the delegates' own responsibility, an appeal for loyalty to their leaders. ''You have failed to accept Gandhi's leadership in the past,'' he said, ''do not fail now to accept Motilal's.''

Sir Ali Imam closed the long debate by a frank and helpful speech in favor of Dominion Status. His arguments were greatly strengthened by his declaration: ''I am a Muslim, but all my life I have believed that I am an Indian first.'' He admitted that, theoretically, Independence was a higher ideal than Dominion Status; but to prevent a grave contest between Hindus and Muslims over the election of an executive under Independence; and to defend the country against foreign attacks, he favored Dominion Status as the next step, while cherishing Independence as the ultimate goal.

After this conciliatory speech from an important Muslim source, it hardly needed the rebuttal which Mr. Sen Gupta was permitted to make in reply to some of his critics. But his avowal that he favored Dominion Status at first chiefly for the reason that it alone could unite the country for striving to win the ultimate goal of Independence, probably helped in deciding the vote.

About twenty amendments which had been offered in favor of Independence were voted down; and then the resolution for Dominion Status was adopted with only one negative vote on the part of those voting. The chairman, Dr. Ansari, thereupon declared that the resolution had been adopted *nemine contradicente;* but, on the demand of the Independence Leaguers, he agreed that they should be permitted to cast their votes in the Congress Committee, to which the resolution was now referred.

THE STRUGGLE BEHIND THE SCENE

Thus, as far as the Convention was concerned, Dominion Status had won a Pyrrhic victory. But the Independence movement was not yet by any means killed, or indeed even scotched. More than one hundred signatures to the declaration of the Independence League, which Mr. Iyengar had read to the Convention, were already received; and among the signers were many powerful chieftains, including President Motilal Nehru's own son, the Pandit Jawaharlal.

Jawaharlal Nehru had been brought up in luxury and finished his training in Oxford. But so far from becoming callous to his people's desire for self-government, or growing pro-British in his Oxford environment, he became an ardent worker for Independence. His father, a conservative and very successful lawyer, is said to have been so far converted by his brilliant son's arguments and enthusiasm that he restricted his personal expenditures to very modest proportions, and devoted himself and his fortune to the promotion of India's home-rule. Now, in Calcutta, the father and son had come to an apparent parting of their ways. The elder Nehru was an ardent advocate of Dominion Status as the next step; the younger was for Independence, first and last and all the time.

This was a personal problem of the first magnitude for Motilal to solve; and for its solution, as well as for others, he leaned heavily upon Gandhi. Some observers believed, indeed, that it was the grave crisis in which Motilal was placed and Gandhi's loyalty to his old friend that caused Gandhi to decide on taking an active part in the political issue, rather than Gandhi's own desire and initiative. This does not appear altogether probable, as even stronger cords were drawing him into the vortex. But at any rate, the two leaders were closeted together at intervals during most of the afternoon and early evening of Sunday, the 23rd; and their consultations over the Independence problem were interrupted only to receive a delegation of Sikhs from the Punjab, who came to protest that, unless they could receive adequate guarantees against Muslim domination in their district under the new constitution, they would secede from the Convention.

Meanwhile, there was a split also in the Muslim camp. The Ali brothers attempted to secure an Independence delegation to the Convention from the

Khilafat Committees of Calcutta and Bengal, and conducted an irregular election of a rival delegation. The Central Khilafat Committee was also divided on the issue, the members from the Punjab and Bengal standing solidly for Dominion Status, and those from the United Provinces dividing half and half.

The All-Parties Bengal Muslim Conference was held on Sunday, and its president, Sir Abdur Rahim, assured it that " it would be a grave political blunder at this crisis to reject the Nehru Report wholesale." At the same time, he opposed the centralizing tendency of the report, and demanded a federal form of government so that Muslim rights might be adequately safeguarded. The chairman of its Reception Committee, Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, defined these rights as " the existence and protection of communities on the basis of different religions and cultures—nationalism in the sense of cultural unity being impossible in India under present conditions." He therefore advocated " an agreement between the two cultural units to have the same political rights and obligations in their widest sense." The conference adopted this view of federalism versus nationalism; but resolved to support Dominion Status as recommended by the Nehru Report.

Meanwhile, also, the newspaper organs of the various parties took up the editorial cudgels in favor of Independence or Dominion Status. Mr. Satyaranjan Bakshi, editor of the Calcutta *Forward,* which was one of the most influential of the radical papers,[11] had signed the statement of the Independence League. On December 23, after the first meeting of the Convention, he had sounded the alarm in an editorial entitled, " The Real and the Ideal." In this he declared that " the British tutelage must not continue a day longer and the relentless British exploitations must cease today. No true sons and daughters of Mother India love the chains that bind them. No true sons and daughters of Mother India can have any patience with the galling yoke that has made them slaves in their own homes and despicable pariahs abroad. The alien domination must go, and go today." Speaking for " the man in the street, the man in the mass," the editorial continued: " It cannot be gainsaid that if a plebiscite could be taken today, the vast majority of the people would at once and unhesitatingly cry for complete independence. . . . . The man in the mass—crushed under his many burdens, amidst the cheerless surroundings of the slum and the hovel, harried, hounded and hungry—*he* has no love for British misrule, *he* has no illusions about British generosity or justice. . . . . The British connection has no charm for the despised and the down-trodden, and its only sanction today is the length of the *lathie* and the strength of the baton."

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[11] Its editor-in-chief has since been imprisoned for "sedition," and it has changed its name to *Liberty*.

This appeal to " the under-dog " in behalf of Independence was probably inspired or strengthened by a meeting of the All-India Workers and Peasants Conference, which had occurred in Calcutta the day before. The conference had rejected the Nehru Report and the All Parties Convention as being too " bourgeois," and had declared in favor of its own programme. This programme was adopted, on the 23rd, in a series of proletarian resolutions; and on the 24th, its members marched *en masse* to the Convention to demonstrate in the eyes of the delegates the strength and earnestness of their demands for Independence and a proletariat Republic.

THE NEHRU REPORT

The Convention had adjourned on the 23rd immediately after its adoption of the resolution for Dominion Status, and it reassembled on Monday, the 24th. The attendance was smaller than on the previous day; for the questions to be discussed were considered of relatively minor importance, and it was believed that the critical struggle was going on among the leaders behind the scene over the question of Independence.

But Gandhi, the most important of the leaders, having passed some very strenuous hours after his arrival on Sunday morning, and realizing the delicacy and difficulty of the task confronting him, decided to resort to his habit of " going into the silence," for 24 hours, in order to gain strength and guidance. Accordingly, on Sunday evening at 8 o'clock his day of rest and silence began. After a few hours' sleep, he passed the rest of the time sitting on the floor, in Indian fashion, turning his spinning-wheel; and, although a group of a dozen friends and disciples sat on the floor around him, not a word was spoken, and only the hum of the spinning-wheel broke the silence. It was evidently a period of profound but hopeful meditation, and he came out of it with all his habitual geniality, calm and vigor restored.[12]

While Gandhi was thus restoring his soul beside the still waters, the Convention held its session (on Monday, the 24th) and Motilal Nehru attended it, to further the adoption of other features of his report. He moved, first, that the term " citizen " should be defined so as to include citizens of the other British Dominions. This was opposed on the ground that the Dominions did not grant equal rights of citizenship to Indians; to which Nehru replied that, though this inequality did exist at present even in India, it would be replaced by equality under Dominion Status. His opponents feared, however, that if India should accord equality of citizenship to others in its fundamental constitution it would be debarred from later reciprocal legislation against those Dominions which did not grant equal rights to Indians. It was, therefore, agreed, on motion of Mr. K. M. Munshi, that the question be referred to a committee of six.

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[12] We were privileged to share the last half-hour of this silence, and to have another half-hour of conference with Mr. Gandhi after it was over.

The Convention next considered the recommendation in the Nehru Report that " all titles to private and personal property lawfully acquired and enjoyed at the establishment of the Commonwealth are hereby guaranteed." This was opposed by some delegates of socialistic or communistic faith, and by others who, like Mr. Madyan Nair of Kerela, desired to leave the future Parliament untrammeled in its possible duty of acquiring or reclaiming certain vested interested. Others, like Mr. Sen Gupta, opposed it because it might militate again the interests of the tenants, working-men and peasants of Bengal, " whose natural rights had been flagrantly violated," by the British Government's law entitled The Permanent Settlement of Bengal. Mr. Satyendranath Banerjee denounced this law as an iniquitous one, and doubted if any title acquired under the " satanic government " of the British could be described as having been lawfully acquired.

On the other hand, the Honorable Ramdas Puntalu supported the recommendation on the ground that a change of government should not involve a confiscation of private rights; and that the retention of the guarantee would give confidence to all sections in India, landlords and tenants, capital and labor, alike. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya stressed this last argument and stated that no sinister motive such as had been charged against him by Mr. Viswanathan, but a genuine desire to " unite both zemindars and landlords in the fight for India's freedom," was the real reason why the recommendation had been inserted in the Report.

Amendments were offered, like that of Mr. Sriprakash of Benares, which provided that " only those titles to private property—which had been acquired in a manner still regarded as lawful in the Commonwealth " should be guaranteed. These amendments were opposed, by Dr. Sayed Mahmood of Benares and others, on the ground that they were merely splitting hairs and, as dealing with details, would disturb the basic structure of the Nehru Report. On vote by a show of hands, all the amendments were declared defeated, and the original motion was carried, with the dissent of the members of the Trades Union Congress, the Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha, and the Bengal Namasudra Association.

There were two amendments to other clauses discussed in the session which were adopted, and which are of much interest or importance, especially in American eyes. These were amendments abolishing capital punishment and prohibiting " the manufacture, import and sale of alcoholic liquors, except for medicinal or industrial purposes."

The abolition of " capital punishment within the Commonwealth of India " was proposed by Mr. Bal Krishna Sarma, and obtained a very large majority.

Mr. Rajagopal Chariar moved to make the prohibition of alcoholic liquors " a fundamental part of

India's constitution, as is the case in the American Republic.'' He argued that universal education and public welfare work had been made fundamental duties of the government, and that eradication of the drink evil was of no less fundamental importance, if India was to be prosperous under universal suffrage. His motion was supported by a delegate from the Ahmedya Community, and after very little debate was also adopted by a substantial majority.

One further amendment bringing all courts of law within the jurisdiction, appellate and administrative, of the High Court of Judicature, was adopted, and the Convention adjourned until the afternoon of December 27.

WORKERS, PEASANTS AND YOUTHS

The intervening two days (December 25 and 26) were nominally set apart for the meeting of the Subjects Committee of the National Congress, of which many of the delegates to the Convention were also members. But they proved very useful as a testing-time in which a solution of such grave problems as Independence and Communal Representation might be attempted.

On the one hand, the Bengal delegates to the Conference of the All-India Workers' and Peasants' Party, together with the various trades unions which they represented, seceded from the Party on Christmas Day, nominally because of the procedure followed at the Conference, but weakening thereby the Independence movement.

On the other hand, the All-India Youth Congress met in Calcutta on Christmas Day and the day after, staged a fervent debate on the political crisis, and listened with approval to the addresses of the chairman of its reception committee, Sj. Subhas Chandra Bose, and its president, Mr. K. F. Nariman. These orators declared that Independence, now and forever, was India's goal, and rejected their elders' counsels of prudence and compromise, even though much-desired unity should be unattained. The day after its final session, its youthful president issued an appeal to Young India to close its ranks, to unite, and to concentrate on a programme of study-circles and loan-libraries for the study of Independence in all countries; to fight communalism in every form; to inculcate the spirit of social rebellion; to popularize physical culture; to organize a youth-militia, and train volunteers for national service; to promote home-manufactures and the boycott of British goods; to do practical welfare-work among the workers and peasants; to organize all youths willing to devote at least one hour every day to the propagation of the programmes of the youth leagues; to form hospitality-committees for the interchange of youths' visits and tours throughout the country; to celebrate national and international days; and to set up information and publicity bureaus for the exchange and publication of news and views.

To reassure their elders, and especially the National Congress and its President, as to the wholehearted coöperation of Young India, the appeal declared: " Young India still looks upon the Congress and its President as the only supreme national authority. As true disciplined and obedient soldiers of Swaraj, they deem it their patriotic duty to obey and carry out all the demands and behests of that supreme authority. As the President has very correctly pointed out, the work before the young and the old India is one and the same; ' only the mentality is different.' Consistently with that different mentality and impatient spirit that the President has referred to, Young India will cling to the higher and what it considers the nobler ideal of complete national independence as clearly indicated by the resolution passed almost unanimously and so enthusiastically in the Youth Congress."

The appeal repudiated also the slightest wish " to commit the unpatriotic blunder of dividing the country, at this most critical juncture, into more parties and factions, as the President apprehends "; and it claimed that if the programme as stated above were loyally carried out, Young India would " reach its higher goal " the quicker and thus end all talk and discussion about Dominion Status.

An even more radical conference of the youths, namely, the All-India Socialist Youths' Conference, was held immediately following the former, on December 27th and 28th, with Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru as its presiding officer.[13]

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[13] This association of the younger Nehru with the Youth Movement was strikingly reflected in the part he played in the National Congress. See *infra,* p. 70.

THE MUSLIM LEAGUE

During the two critical days of December 25 and 26, when the All-Parties Convention was in abeyance, and when the young men of India were making up their minds on the national problem, the Muslim leaders were going through a similar struggle. The twentieth annual session of the All-India Muslim League was opened on the 26th, after a preliminary committee meeting on the 25th. About 300 delegates attended and the Maharajah of Mahmudabad was in the chair. The chairman of the reception committee, Maulavi Abdul Karim, denounced the appointment of the Simon Commission as wholly inconsistent with " the higher political ideals of international justice and racial equality as are enshrined in the treaties, constitutions and pacts which the League of Nations and all constituent empires have deliberately adopted after the great European War." He gave high praise to the Nehru Report as " an excellent basis for final deliberation and an effective presentation of India's minimum joint demand." But at the same time, both he and the Maharajah in his presidential address rejected Independence as impracticable and gave warning that even under Dominion Status, the rights of Mussulman communities must be amply safeguarded.

The retiring president of the league, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, commenting on the present crisis, declared that " the future constitution of the country is in the melting-pot, ... the future welfare not only of Mussulmans, but also of the whole of India is at stake''; and his successor appealed, in face of this crisis, for a broad and tolerant view of communal rights, urging the League to appoint delegates to attend and coöperate with the All-Parties Convention. The Subjects Committee of the League, at a meeting on the evening of the 26th, voted down all opposition and agreed by a large majority to support the president's plan of sending 23 delegates to the Convention. This recommendation was adopted by the League at its meeting on the 27th, and its 23 delegates, representative of all the Provinces, went immediately to the meeting of the Convention, where they were received with enthusiastic applause.

The Muslim demands, which were to be presented by these delegates to the Convention, were that one-third of the members of the Central Legislature should be Moslems; that in the Punjab and Bengal, seats should be reserved for Moslems, on the basis of population, in case adult suffrage should not be adopted; and that residuary powers should be left to the people of the Provinces, and not rest in the Central Legislature as suggested in the Nehru Report.[14]

MUSLIMS, PARSIS AND SIKHS

When these demands were brought to the All-Parties Convention at its morning session on the

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[14] This last demand was conceded to the people of the States in the Tenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

27th, it was agreed that a sub-committee of 35 be appointed to discuss them with the Muslim delegates. At the afternoon session of the Convention, Mr. M. V. Patel, on behalf of the Parsi Association of Bombay (a religious organization known as the Mazdayasni Mandal), praised the Nehru Report, but desired to know why the Parsee Community [15] had not been represented on the Committee and had been ignored by the Report; and also how it was proposed to protect that community in its rights. At the same time, he declared that the majority of the Parsi Community had learned to hate communalism in every shape and form, and disdained to ask for or possess any special communal rights and privileges; that, as a community, they had made common cause with the Hindus and the Mohammedans, and boycotted the Simon Commission; that they had shown sufficient moral courage to give wholehearted support to the Nehru Report, in spite of their grievances; and that they had resolved to trust to their own abilities and merits, and to the leaders' sense of justice and fair play, for a share in the government of the country when India was free.

Mr. R. K. Shidwai, representing the Parsee political party known as the Panchayet, supported Mr. Patel's position, which made a favorable impression on the Convention and served as a good introduction to the report of the sub-committee on Moslem rights, which was presented to the Convention on the afternoon of the 26th. This report stated that no agreement had been reached by the sub-committee on the reservation for Muslims of one-third of the seats in the Central Legislature; that adult suffrage *would* be established in the Punjab and Bengal; and that residuary powers should rest with the Central Legislature. The sub-committee also unanimously agreed that amendments to the constitution should be adopted only by four-fifths of each house of the legislature acting separately, and by four-fifths of the legislature in joint session.

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[15] The Parsees form a small fraction of 1 per cent of the population: in all India only 80,000, of whom 60,000 are in Bombay.

Mr. Jinnah, on behalf of the Muslim League, and Mr. Sherwani, on behalf of the Central Khilafat Committee, made appeals to the Convention to overrule its committee's report and agree to the reservation of one-third of the seats for Moslems. A Liberal delegate, Mr. T. B. Sapru, said that while he was opposed to the reservation he was willing to concede it for Muslim support; Mr. C. Y. Chintamani, another Liberal leader, and Mr. M. R. Jayakar, a leader of the Hindu Maha Sabha, opposed this concession lest it should disrupt other elements, united at present behind the Nehru Report. This last consideration prevailed; and the Convention by a large majority adopted the sub-committee's report.

Commenting upon this action, Mr. Jinnah gave out a statement to the press, before he left Calcutta for Bombay on December 30th, in which he said: ‘‘ The Hindu Mahasabha gave the ultimatum that if one word is changed in the Nehru proposals re the Hindu-Moslem question, they will completely withdraw their support to the Nehru Report. . . . . In these circumstances, what I consider as the most reasonable modifications suggested by the All-India Moslem League delegates before the league could be called upon to accept the Nehru Report, when placed before the Convention by the Moslem League delegates, were bodily rejected. The fate of the Nehru Report was sealed by the speech of Mr. Jayakar at the Convention. It is obvious that even these five principal organisations of the country [Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Convention, and Liberal Federation] are not, at any rate at present, in agreement.''

The delegation of Sikhs from the Punjab had endeavored to persuade the sub-committee to reserve 30 per cent of the seats in that province for *them;* but the committee had rejected this plan, as well as Mahatma Gandhi's proposal that 11 per cent be reserved for the Sikhs, together with the right of contesting additional ones. It had also refused the Bengal Hindu Sabha's demand for 48 per cent of the seats in Bengal.

The Sikh demand was pressed at the meeting of the Convention which occurred on December 30. When the report of the sub-committee was taken up for discussion, Sirdar Mehtab Singh, on behalf of the Central Sikh League, moved that '' communalism in any form, direct or indirect, shall not be the basis of any future constitution for India, and the Nehru

Report should be amended accordingly.'' This motion was ruled out of order (on the advice of Dr. Ansari and Sjt. S. Iyer the Vijayraghavachariar or '' constitutional expert '') ; but the secretary of the Central Sikh League, Sirdar Harnam Singh, read a statement of the League's position, and following this the Sikh members of the Convention, to the number of about 12, walked out in a body, with shouts of '' Shat Ori Akal.''

The Sikhs' statement quoted by Mr. Jinnah, a Moslem leader, as saying that the test of a good constitution is the security of minorities which it affords; but, it declared, the Nehru constitution does not afford this security to the 11.1 per cent of the people of the Punjab who are Sikhs, and to whom it is proposed to give only 2 per cent of the seats in the Provincial Council and none in the Central Legislature. It declared that '' the Central Sikh League will be prepared to work shoulder to shoulder with their fellow-countrymen for the emancipation of Mother India, and do their utter-most to break the shackles and trammels of the foreign yoke.'' It recorded also some of the many services and sufferings of the Sikhs to the common cause. But, in view of the Convention's indifference to their demands, the statement concluded, '' the Central Sikh League withholds its support from the Nehru Report and feels constrained not to take any more part in the proceedings of the Convention.''

The other Sikh delegates to the Convention, coming from other districts than the Punjab, differed from one another on the question. Sirdar Gurdial Singh, of the Namdhari Sikhs Community, supported the Nehru Report as the best solution of the problem under existing circumstances.

Mr. K. C. Ralliaram, a Christian Indian from the Punjab, hoping to conciliate the Sikhs in his province, moved an addition to the Nehru Report which should give to the Sikh minority in the Punjab, the Northwest Frontier Province and Baluchistan, the same ratio of representation as that given to other minorities in other provinces. ‘‘ By culture, historic importance and political position,’’ he said, ‘‘ the Sikhs in the Punjab are perfectly right in claiming special representation.’’

Another amendment was offered by Sj. Suren Biswas that representation be by reservation of seats on the four communal divisions of Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and Hindus.

Mr. K. F. Nariman, a Parsi from Bombay, on the contrary, opposed communalism in any shape or form. and cited the case of the Parsees, who in spite of their small numbers had never suffered, either in elections to the provincial legislatures, or in city corporate life, he himself having been elected to the Bombay Council. Reservation of seats, he believed, would react against nationalist members; trust in one another would beget trust, and true nationalism would grow.

Dr. Alam recalled the recent Punjab compromise at Lucknow which accepted the Nehru Report *in toto*. Pandit Malaviya complimented Mr. Mangal Singh for having stood by the Report, even though the Sikh League had deserted him; and he urged the Sikhs to accept sacrifices if necessary for the attainment of national solidarity. Maulana Jaffarali pleaded that the fight for freedom should not be retarded by the communal dispute. " When liberty is attained," he said, " the interests of all communities will be safe."

Dr. Annie Besant " would move for the abolition of communalism altogether," were she not liable to be ruled out of order; for, she said, " instead of fighting poverty and famine, the banes of British rule, we have to fight communalism and waste our time in devising schemes to satisfy it."

The debate was closed by Motilal Nehru, who reminded the Convention that the Report was based on an agreement among the Hindus, Moslems and two nationalist representatives of the Sikhs; hence the Sikh League, although it had not as a body associated itself with the agreement, should not reject the Report without trying to come to another agreement with the Hindus and Moslems.

The amendments of Messrs. Ralliaram and Biswas were voted down, and the report of the sub-committee was adopted. After the Convention adjourned its meeting on the 30th, five of the Sikh seceders [16] issued a statement to the press, reiterating their determination " always to fight shoulder to shoulder with their countrymen for freedom and to do nothing that would strengthen the hands of the Bureaucracy."

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[16] These were all Singhs, namely, Messrs. Tara, Gianisher, Harnam, Mehtab and Waza.

This raid upon the Convention for the reservation of seats for the various communities had been brewing ever since the publication of the Nehru Report in August, 1928, and had been precipitated in Calcutta during Convention Week by the All-Parties' Bengal Muslim Conference, held on December 23. Sir Abdur Rahim, the president of this Conference, and Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy, the chairman of its reception committee, had voiced its demand for the reservation of Muslim seats.

The All-India Khilafat Conference, held in Calcutta on December 24, 25 and 26, revealed a cleavage in the Muslim ranks, one wing under the presidency of Maulana Mohammed Ali, demanding Independence and a Federal Republic of autonomous provinces, the other, Dominion Status. A fracas resulted, in which sticks and knives were freely used to coerce the opposition and to drive them from the hall. About 45 of the leading seceders, or fugitives, agreed to send a delegate to the All-Parties Convention and to coöperate there with the delegates from the All-Indian Moslem League.

This serious split in the Bengal Muslim camp was carried into the All-India Muslim League, at its meeting on December 29, when some Bengal delegates, led by Fazlal Haq, Nurul Haq Chaudhury and H. S. Surhawardy, attempted to persuade the League to send delegates to an All-Parties' Conference of Mussulmans, which was being organized at Delhi by Sir Muhammad Shafi. The League, however, accepted the arguments of Mr. Chogla and its president, the Maharajah of Mahmudabad, against stultifying itself by thus recognizing a rival organization, and the Delhi invitation was voted down.

The League's concluding session was held on December 30, when only a resolution of sympathy for King Amanullah Khan of Afghanistan was unanimously adopted, and an appeal was made to the Viceroy against some features of a Bengal Tenancy Bill. Haq and Surhawardy had led a secession from the League's meeting, and in view of this fact and the rejection of the chief Muslim demand—that for separate electorates or reserved seats—Mr. Jinnah moved and carried the motion to adjourn, the Council to reconvene the meetings of the League at some time before the end of May, 1929. By this time, it was hoped, the wide difference of political opinion among Mussulmans themselves, and between them and the Hindus, might be bridged over.

This difference of opinion was accentuated, however, at the meetings of the Moslem All-Parties Conference, which were held at Delhi, December 31 and January 1 and 2. About 600 Moslems and Moslem societies accepted the invitation to attend, the notable exception being the All-India Muslim League, or " the Jinnah League," as it was called by its rival. The Conference was presided over by the Aga Khan, the religious head of the Muslims in India; and under his and other conservative leadership, it rejected the Nehru report *in toto,* and resolved to present its views of India's government before the Simon Commission.

THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS AND ITS COMMITTEES

Meanwhile, during all this time of ferment over communalism and the overshadowing issue of Dominion Status *versus* Independence, the work of the All-Parties Convention had gone on side by side with that of two committees of the National Congress, namely, the Working Committee and the Subjects Committee. The meetings of these committees and of the Congress itself occurred as below.[16a]

[16a]

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The Working Committee

This committee was composed of eleven outstanding members of the Congress of 1927; all of them were members of the Convention, and some of them were members also of the Independence League. It met in Calcutta on December 22 and devoted five days (December 22 to 26) to a discussion of the question of Dominion Status or Independence.

On one side, Iyengar and his independence colleagues insisted on retaining the clause in the Delhi resolution of 1928, which declared that " true free-

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dom can only be by means of independence.'' On the other side, Motilal Nehru and his supporters argued that dominion status represented the longest political advance possible in the near future, and that until it was attained no campaign for independence should be engaged in.

After four days of fruitless debate, the Working Committee adjourned on the evening of Christmas Day, having reached no agreement, and the gulf was further widened by Iyengar, who gave notice that he would present to the Congress and Convention a resolution repudiating dominion status as the basis of the new constitution. At this crisis, Mahatma Gandhi asserted his leadership by inviting the committee to his home, on the morning of the 26th, and urging upon them the acceptance of the following resolutions:

'' This Congress, having considered the constitution recommended by the All-Parties Committee report, welcomes it as a great contribution towards the solution of India's political and communal problems, and congratulates the committee on the virtual unanimity of its recommendation.

'' Whilst adhering to the resolution relating to complete independence passed at the Madras Congress, this Congress adopts the constitution drawn up by the All-Parties Committee as a great step in political advance, especially as it represents the largest measure of agreement attained among the important parties in the country, with the following two provisos:

" That the Congress shall not be bound by the constitution if it is not accepted on or before December 31, 1930; and that in the event of non-acceptance by the British Parliament of the constitution by that date, the Congress will revive non-violent non-coöperation by advising the country to refuse taxation and every other aid to the Government."

This compromise thus retained independence as the ultimate goal, while accepting dominion status as the next step; and adopted a two years' preparation for taking that step, with or without the compliance of the British Parliament. Should the British Parliament resist this step at the end of two years Gandhi's historic policy of " non-violent non-coöperation " should be resorted to for overcoming its opposition. By implication, either independence or dominion status, or both, could then be advocated. Immediate measures, the resolutions also urged, should be taken " to bring about the boycott of foreign cloth by advocating and stimulating the production and adoption of handspun and handwoven khaddar."

Thus Gandhi's policy of " non-violent non-coöperation " and Nehru's dominion status were provided for in the proposed resolutions; while ultimate independence was conceded to Iyengar and the Independence League, while to them also was made the concession that " Nothing in this resolution shall interfere with the propaganda for familiarizing the people with the goal of independence, in so far as it does not conflict with the prosecution of the campaign for the adoption of the said report.''

The Working Committee of the Congress had planned to present its recommendation on December 25, at 2.30 P. M. to the All-India Congress Committee (generally called the ‘‘Subjects Committee''), a meeting of which was called at that time. The failure of the Working Committee to reach an agreement on the morning of the 25th caused an abrupt postponement of the meeting of the Subjects Committee until the next day at the same hour. This notice of postponement was issued just as the members, visitors and pressmen were filling the committee's special pandal; but it did not cause much surprise, since rumors of the great debate and disagreement were rife.

The meeting of the Working Committee on the morning of the 26th at Gandhi's house was prolonged and intense. Gandhi did his utmost to persuade Iyengar, the younger Nehru and the other Independence Leaguers to accept his compromise. These stood firm; but Gandhi succeeded in persuading the committee to adopt his plan by a vote of six to five. After this action was taken, the committee adjourned to make its report to the All-India Congress Committee, which was to meet at 2.30 P. M. It was not until an hour and a half later, however, that the Committee got down to business, for Gandhi continued until that time his efforts to bring over to the compromise the independence group.

THE SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, DECEMBER 26

Meanwhile, the "All-India Congress Committee," which was soon to be transformed into the " Subjects Committee," met in the atmosphere of prevailing excitement at 3.45 P. M. on the 26th. Dr. Ansari, as President of the Convention, was ex officio chairman. The proceedings of the Working Committee and the annual report of the General Secretary were received. An animated debate then ensued on a motion, which was later withdrawn, to censure the Congress Party in the Bengal Council for supporting legislation inimical to the best interests of the peasants in relation to their landlords.

Dr. Ansari, the retiring president of the Convention and of the Congress, then made his farewell speech, in which he praised his predecessor, Mr. Iyengar, for his effective efforts towards unity, and praised the Nehru Report. He asserted that a grave crisis had arisen in India, that dominion status was the heart of the Nehru Report, and that the committee should think long and carefully before deciding to stab that heart and thus kill the whole organism.

The committee then resolved itself into the Subjects Committee, and the new president, Pandit Motilal Nehru, took the chair. Nehru's address was a short one, being confined to emphasizing the crisis caused by the sudden emergence of a " question of the most vital importance to the whole country," and appealing for patriotic support. Resolutions of condolence for the death of three ex-presidents of the Congress and three other members were then passed. Among the former was Lala Lajpat Rai, whose death, the resolution declared, had been "accelerated by the injuries he had received at the hands of the police of Lahore, when leading the boycott procession on the arrival of the Simon Commission"; and another resolution was adopted condemning this "deliberate and unprovoked attack."

GHANDI'S RESOLUTION FOR DOMINION STATUS

These preliminaries being finished, Gandhi presented the resolutions which had been recommended by the Working Committee and advocated their adoption in a long and conciliatory speech

Stating (in Hindusthani) his preference for speaking of Indian affairs in an Indian language, he said that the presence of South India delegates who did not understand Hindi, obliged him to speak in English, which he proceeded to do in an excellent style. He referred to the splendid reception accorded the Nehru Report by the country, its opponents and its disinterested critics; recalled the almost insuperable obstacles to unity which the committee had overcome in drafting it; declared that Dominion Status was the very heart of the report, and that it was in no way inferior to Independence; admitted that independence—"true independence"—probably lay somewhere out in the future and that he and his hearers might be called upon some time to strive and die for it, as they should be ready now to strive and die for dominion status. " The fire of independence," he said at one place in his address, " is burning just as brightly in my breast as in the most fiery breast in this country; but ways and methods differ."

This speech was well received by the bulk of the committee; but the younger Nehru and Sjt. Kiran Sankar Roy immediately offered amendments to the resolutions, expressing their opposition to anything but complete independence as a basis of the constitution. Other amendments were offered, and it was agreed that they would be accepted at the secretariat until eight o'clock that evening, the meeting itself adjourning until eight o'clock the following morning.

This meeting of the Subjects Committee was regarded as a critical one, and many rumors circulated as to its character and conduct. For example, Mohamed Ali, the president of the All-India Khilafat Conference, informed that body that the debate in the Subjects Committee had resulted in a fist-fight and physical injuries to a number of the participants: a piece of misinformation which he was obliged to retract at a meeting of the conference on the following day.

The radical daily, *Forward,* in its editorial on the morning of the 26th, came out flatly in favor of independence, and declared that " the Subjects Committee today will make or mar the destiny of India." In its editorial on the 27th, it said that, " In moving the resolution on behalf of the Working Committee [on the day before], Mahatmaji gave to it all the weight of his personality and he moved it with the passionate earnestness of his nature and his characteristic clarity of thought and expression.'' But it also declared that Gandhi's resolution '' asks the Congress and the country to tone down the great and the noble ideal of independence. It is only great ideals that have enthused and will enthuse men. Great risks are taken and sacrifices cheerfully made in willing homage to great ideals.''

ADVOCACY OF INDEPENDENCE, DECEMBER 27

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, as his father's son and Gandhi's disciple, had consented to read the compromise resolutions to the Subjects Committee before Gandhi made his speech in support of them. But when the committee reassembled on the morning of the 27th, the younger Nehru offered his amendment for independence and made a speech in which he said: '' We are prepared to subordinate even our ideas to a large extent, but there are one or two things in which we find it impossible to give in whatever the consequences. In programmes of action there can be a compromise, but I have not heard of compromise over ideals, or of giving up an ideal in order to suit others' fancies.''

Turning to dominion status, Nehru said: '' No country in the world has consciously or willingly accepted dominion status. Why should India alone be unique in accepting it like that? . . . . Whether from the point of view of the honour of the country, or even from the point of view of expediency, it is foolish to accept dominion status. . . . . I had the energy to serve the country: that energy oozes out of me at the thought of dominion status. I cannot go about spending my energy for dominion status. You find in India today groups and organisations full of hope and energy and militant spirit.[17] Are you going to help the development of that militant spirit, that revolutionary spirit; or are you going to kill it by feeble compromise with other parties? "

Finally, Nehru denounced British imperialism; recalled the expectation of Egypt, Arabia, Persia, and China that India would advance the cause of freedom; declared that " the greatest obstacle in the world's progress toward freedom has been the British Empire and the British possession of India. You want freedom for India, and yet you are prepared to accept the psychology of Imperialism in this resolution. You will help the psychology of Imperialism so long as you don't declare you will have nothing to do with it."

This fervent speech coming from such a source, made a profound impression upon the committee-members, many of whom applauded it to the echo. Its proposed amendment was supported by Jamnadas Mehta, an Independence Leaguer of Bombay, who objected vigorously to Gandhi's desire for a two years' delay. This, he declared, on the basis of his travels in England and Europe in 1927, was " pure delusion," and dominion status " would not be accepted by the British Parliament even in 200 years." Professing the greatest veneration for Mahatma Gandhi, Mr. Mehta nevertheless declared that his resolution was self-contradictory; and that it would result merely in its receipt being acknowledged in a note by " the Viceroy's Private Secretary to Pandit Motilal's Private Secretary," and its being forwarded to the hated Simon Commission which all India desired to ignore. As to the permission given by the resolution for advocating independence, provided the campaign for dominion status is not interfered with thereby, Mr. Mehta said: " Now this is freedom on indulgence, and amounts to Mr. Gandhi telling me: ' Here is a rupee; you can spend as much as you like, provided you keep 16 annas intact.' "[18]

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[17] It will be remembered that the All-India Youth Congress was meeting in Calcutta on December 25 and 26; of this, the younger Nehru was an outstanding leader, and he was the presiding officer of the even more radical All-India Socialist Youths' Congress, which met in Calcutta on December 27 and 28.

These vigorous and popular attacks upon dominion status by such strong forces both within and without the Congress circles made the success of Gandhi's compromise resolution look extremely doubtful. To its aid, however, there came the extreme left in the committee, whose communistic or socialistic views helped to shock even the independence group into conservatism. A spokesman of the radicals, Mr. Nimbkar, an avowed communist of Bombay, moved the rejection of the entire Nehru Report, chiefly because it did not help the establishment of a socialist régime, or repudiate the public debt, or confiscate property acquired by questionable means. He denounced the younger Nehru's amendment in favor of independence as being itself an unacceptable compromise, and Gandhi's resolution as " conceding more to the British than gaining for India." " What pains me most," he said, " is that this Father of the Non-coöperation Movement, at whose feet we learned our lessons of liberty, should now preach dominion status and ask us to go down weakened before the British Government." Repudiating both parties in the committee, he concluded: " I hold that the classes in India are trying to compromise with British Imperialism; but the masses will not leave the fight for true independence."

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[18] There are just 16 annas in a rupee.

Another socialist delegate, Mr. Vishwanatham of Andhra, accentuated economic radicalism, and inquired: " Why should a constitutional guarantee be given to the Nehru Raj and the social system under which the country has been exploited by capitalism and landlordism? "

This inspired some of the moderates, under the leadership of Sardar Sardul Singh of the Punjab, to offer what they called a compromise between Gandhi's and the younger Nehru's proposals, namely, that complete independence should be declared as the goal of India, but that in case the British Government accepted dominion status within a year the Congress would be prepared to approve of it as a substantial advance on the present system of government in this country.

Another Punjab delegate, Dr. Satyapal, supported this proposal. But Dr. Annie Besant moved to omit all reference to complete independence as the goal of the Congress, because, she argued, independence and dominion status are two irreconcilable ideals [in foreign affairs?]. She proceeded to defend dominion status as equivalent to independence in domestic affairs, and to cite the independent part which the dominions like Canada were beginning to play in foreign affairs as well. Pandit Gaurishankar Nisra, of the United Provinces, also came to the support of dominion status; and after his speech, the time allotted for debate on the various amendments having expired, the committee adjourned to meet again at seven o'clock the same evening.

The morning session of the committee had revealed such a strong difference of opinion that the leaders labored through the afternoon to reach some more acceptable proposal than the Gandhi resolutions contained. The committee which reassembled at seven o'clock was almost immediately adjourned until the next morning to enable the leaders to reach a successful conclusion. But the extremist newspapers on both sides, and even the moderates, like *The Pioneer* of Allahabad, published very pessimistic articles and editorials, prophesying the inevitable failure of both the formal and informal discussions. This pessimism, bordering on despair, prevailed throughout the city and country. Some newspapers even reported that when the independence leaders said they would accept a resolution " approving," but not " adopting," the Nehru Report with its basis of dominion status, Gandhi denounced " such diplomacy, which stinks in my nostrils," and that both he and Motilal Nehru threatened to resign from the committee and leave it and the Congress in the hands of the Independent Leaguers. This threat may have been made and, if so, it was probably responsible for the agreement which was finally arrived at.

GANDHI'S COMPROMISE RESOLUTION, DECEMBER 28

When the Subjects Committee reassembled on the morning of the 28th, it was rumored that three of the chief leaders, Gandhi, Motilal Nehru and Iyengar, had agreed on a compromise resolution which they believed would be accepted by all parties to the controversy. The committee's proceedings were delayed for an hour and a half, first, because of the ceremony attending the raising of India's national flag; then by the absence of Motilal Nehru, who was conferring with Muslim intransigeants; finally, by the absence of Gandhi, who, as he explained on his arrival, had continued his effort to induce the other leaders, especially the younger Nehru, to accept the compromise resolution.

This compromise resolution differed from the former one offered by Gandhi chiefly in that it pledged the Congress to adopt the constitution recommended by the Nehru Report, provided " it is accepted by the British Parliament on or before the 31st of December, 1929 "—instead of 1930. This cut down the period of preparation from two years to one, which was pleasing to the Independence group; and another formal concession made to them was the proviso that " consistently with the above, nothing in this resolution shall interfere with carrying on in the name of the Congress a propaganda for complete independence." The independence propaganda was permitted by Gandhi's first resolution " in so far as it does not conflict with the prosecution of the campaign for the adoption of the said report [including dominion status]." This condition was apparently repeated in the second resolution in the words, " consistently with the above "; but its emphasis fell on the right to advocate complete independence.

When Gandhi arrived at the committee meeting about half past eleven, he was received with the usual acclaim and asked for permission to substitute the second compromise resolution for the first one he had offered. He supported this request in a long speech, in which he frankly admitted that he had been obliged by the strength of the immediate independence movement to submit to " the painful duty " of withdraw-ing his first resolution and agreeing to the second. " It is not because I am sorry for that resolution, not because I am not in love with that resolution, not because the resolution I want to move now is better than that I moved the other day; for I hold that it was far superior than the resolution which is now in my hand. But, as I have said, our life is a perpetual struggle against oppressive environments [of the British government], and a perpetual struggle within our own ranks.[19] If we want unity, then adjustment and readjustment, a series of compromises, honourable to both parties and to the variety of opinions, must be achieved. Hence [I will move this other resolution] because I know that our national interest will be better served by this resolution which I consider far inferior to the former resolution, because it will hold all parties together."

Having thus emphasized his own concession for the sake of unity, Gandhi, expressed his entire confidence in the sincerity and patriotic desires of his opponents. Near the beginning of his speech he had paid a fine tribute to the younger Nehru, whom he had endeavored in vain to convince or persuade. " He is a highsouled man," said Gandhi; " he does not want to create unnecessary bitterness. Although he is the Secretary [of this committee], and a faithful, diligent secretary, it is for that reason he wants to remain absent. He does not want to be a helpless witness to these proceedings with which he is not in touch.'' Jawaharlal Nehru's refusal to accept the compromise, Gandhi ascribed to the fact that '' he is impatient to throw off the yoke in every 24 hours of his life. He impatiently broods upon the grievances of his country and he is impatient to remove the growing pauperism of the masses. He is impatient against the capitalists who are in the country, and who are exploiting the masses, as he is against the capitalists who rule over this country and ' exploit and bleed it,' in the words used by the late Lord Salisbury. . . . . How can he help feeling dissatisfied? He would not be Jawaharlal if he did not strike out for himself an absolutely unique and original line in the pursuit of his ideals. He considers nobody, not even his father, nor wife, nor child. His own country and his duty to his own country he considers, and nothing else.''

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[19] Earlier in his speech he had said: "Our National life is a perpetual struggle while it is growing. It is a struggle not only against environments that seek to crush us, but it is also a struggle within our own ranks, and often a struggle within our ranks more bitter than the struggle with the environment which is outside of ourselves."

Gandhi having thus taken the committee entirely into his confidence, declared that he did not share the despondency of Jawaharlal over the proposed resolution, although he said fervently that he shared '' all his grief over the pauperism of the country, over the slavery that is grinding us down.'' Jawaharlal was a socialist, and this reference to his socialism and to Gandhi's own solicitude for the masses paved the way for a warning to the extremists in the socialist, as well as in the independence, ranks. '' Both of us,'' Gandhi said, " were confident that if we were to divide the house, we should have won; but what would that victory have been worth if it had resulted in increased bitterness, if it had meant the weakening of national unity and the weakening of the national forces. There are in our midst today those who would stop at nothing, who in their impatience do not mind if they rush headlong even to perdition."

Declaring that he believed the second resolution to be sufficient for the present needs of the country, he concluded his intimate, fatherly and conciliatory speech by requesting permission to withdraw his former resolution and substitute this one for it. There then ensued an animated debate of four hours' duration. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, who was opposed to the new resolution's added concessions to independence, attacked the method by which it had been arrived at and advocated the former resolution which was also, he declared, the result of a compromise. " I possess a ceaseless desire," he said, " to see the end of the present system of government and its substitution by a government of the people, by the people, for the people. My anxiety to serve the best interest makes me believe that the course outlined in the first resolution is the wisest course; for I feel that if the other resolution is substituted in order to satisfy a party which wants to work for complete independence, then you will alienate a very large body of opinion which is now supporting us."

Although Mr. Satyamurthi objected to Pandit Malaviya arguing in favor of the first resolution or against the second resolution, before Gandhi had been given permission to withdraw the first and advocate the second, Pandit Nehru ruled that he might advance such arguments as he deemed necessary. The arguments he cited were, first, that if one year were allowed before declaring independence, why should not two years be allowed—to which a voice replied: " Why not a hundred years? " Second, that independence could, under the second resolution, be preached in the name of the Congress, and this would inevitably interfere with the campaign for dominion status. Third, that the unity achieved in the All-Parties' Convention rested on dominion status as the immediate goal. And, finally, that the second resolution would alienate still further the Indian princes and the British Parliament—to which a voice ironically replied: " Have you not alienated the sympathy of the worshippers of the Simon Commission? "

After Malaviya's speech, Pandit Nehru put the motion permitting Gandhi to substitute his second resolution for his first one, and this was carried by an overwhelming majority, only four of the 163 members present voting against it.

Mr. Gandhi then moved the adoption of his second resolution and made an extended speech in support of it. He had been summoned peremptorily to an all-night session of the Convention's Subjects Committee the evening before, and therefore had had no sleep since the gruelling discussions of the preceding 12 hours. After apologizing for the consequently " muddled " condition of his brain, he began his speech by advocating the sending of whatever resolution was adopted to the British Viceroy. This plea, he said he realized, would cause some of them to exclaim, " Thou, too, Non-coöperator! " But, he argued: " It is open to the British Government to interpret this resolution as an insolent challenge, if they wish. We need not be afraid of that. But if there is the slightest trace of a change of heart about these governors, then it is open to them also to understand the yearnings of a nation which is trying to rise, which is trying to throw off the yoke of thraldom." Even as a non-coöperator, he said, he could take the resolution to the Viceroy and to the House of Commons, for: " I non-coöperate with evil, I do not non-coöperate with good; I do not non-coöperate with persons, I non-coöperate with measures, and when measures commend themselves to me I coöperate with them. If the Viceroy ask me today to go to him to discuss things of importance for the country on a footing of equality, I will go there barefooted, and still defend my non-coöperation. . . . . It is possible for you to receive a summons to go to the House of Commons, and then you go as national delegates. . . . . It won't be something degrading to us; it won't be something which is a right of the House of Commons to give and for you to take as beggars. It will be then a matter of high contracting parties, as the term goes, even as South Africa went. . . . .

" I have been quoting to you things about South Africa because, not being a student of the history which is written in dead pages, but being a student of history which is now being written, I know more of South Africa than of any other country, because I lived there. General Botha and General Smuts . . . . went to England as delegates and ambassadors to vindicate their people's honour, to gain their liberty, not on terms dictated by the House of Commons, but on terms they had settled at a convention just like this. Have we got a General Botha . . . . and a General Smuts in our midst? I feel we have. If we had not, I would not place this resolution before you; I would simply retire to Sabarmati.

" Dr. Pattabhai Sitaram Iyer asked me: ' What is it that has brought you again out of your den? ' It was love for my dear comrade, Motilal Nehru. When he said: ' You were instrumental in putting this crown of thorns [the presidency and chairmanship] upon my head; you will now have to come and see how many bruises that crown of thorns has caused to my head, and you will have to come and share some of these bruises ': I should be guilty of a breach of friendship, I should be guilty of a breach of duty to the nation, if after having pressed him to take that share at this critical juncture in the history of the country I had not responded to his call and said: ' I shall come on the day you fix, and I shall leave on the day you ask me.' . . . . So many friends have been coming to me and asking: 'If we vote for this resolution and if we vote for this programme, will you repeat what you did in 1920, will you take virtual control of national affairs?' I replied: 'I have not the strength today to fight single-handed. But I will, if you will come to terms with me, and if you will bear the yoke.' The yoke will be much tighter and much heavier than it was in 1920. . . . . If you give me the discipline that I shall exact, then certainly I will give you my work—all of it that my frail body can give."

Turning next to the shortening of the period of preparation from two years to one, Gandhi said: "I now address my remarks to the impatient young men who have insisted upon December 31, 1929. . . . . I thought two years were a short enough time to organise our forces for giving battle, if we must give battle, to the Government. One year is nothing; one year will be required to create discipline in our own ranks. Our Congress roll today is nothing but a bogus affair. Let us face facts. It is worth nothing. We want a living register of the Congress. We want to be in a position to say, even from day to day, so many more members are enrolled, so much more yarn given, so many 4-anna bits given. . . . That will take one year; and one year more will be required for giving ourselves confidence and courage, and for consolidation of communal unity. . . . . I hold therefore that two years is all too short a time. But I said to myself, what does it matter if all these important [? impatient?] young men want me to share the discredit of showing nothing at the end of the year? . . . . I shall gladly share it with them as a comrade and a party to this document. But I give them a warning from this public platform. Let them give themselves, night in and night out, day in and day out, to working out the constructive part of the programme.''

On the preaching of independence, Gandhi said: '' Independence we may reiterate from a million platforms in the name of the Congress; but we must not treat the report of the All-Parties Committee as something separate from independence. By approving it, you are not weakening your struggle for independence. You are using that document as a stage, and as a big stage, in your progress towards independence; and as you harangue upon independence from your platforms, it will be your duty, if you are true to this resolution of approval of your constitution, to say: ' We want you to treat this Nehru Report in terms of our goal and consolidate the Nehru Report in the struggle for independence.' Do not consider the Nehru Report as an excrescence to be deplored, but regard it as an integral part of the struggle for independence.''

In his peroration, Gandhi made another plea for unity: '' I want drops of your life-blood to mingle with mine, drops of Hindu blood to mingle with Muslim blood and Sikh blood, Parsi blood and Christian blood, so that a magnificent memorial may arise in Calcutta, to show what this nation has done in order to earn its liberty, in order to buy its liberty not with gold but with blood.''

The leader of the independence group, Mr. Iyengar, then seconded Gandhi's resolution, '' with a heavy sense of responsibility.'' His reasons for doing so, he stated to be his belief that '' it does not suspend the ideal or objective of complete independence, but obliges all parties to coöperate in a programme calculated to develop the strength of the country for the achievement of complete national independence.''

The opposition to the compromise resolution was led by Dr. Annie Besant, who declared that it was not a compromise at all; that it gave all to the independence party, and nothing to others; that independence could not be procured by peaceful and legitimate means, but only by violence; that non-violent non-coöperation would not succeed in procuring dominion status, because it, like independence, could be procured only by violence; that non-violent non-coöperation would not fall so heavily upon the leaders as upon the peasants, whose lands and cattle would be confiscated for taxes; and that the peaceful, legitimate means of procuring self-government was by organizing an Indian government parallel with that of the British and reaching down to the village panchayets.

Messrs. Nimbkar, Swami Kumaranand and Subhas Chandra Bose also opposed the resolution, but for the reason that they regarded it as lowering or toning down the goal of complete independence. Moreover, said, Mr. Bose, " suppose that the British Parliament in a fit of generosity should accept dominion status; then all talk about the goal of complete independence would vanish."

After three hours of debate and proposals of amendments, a motion for cloture was moved and adopted, and all amendments to the resolutions were either lost by an overwhelming majority or withdrawn. Before putting the main resolution to a vote, President Nehru permitted Mr. Bose, as a representative of the younger, independence group, to make a statement to the effect that, since he had no desire to oppose the older leaders, he would not vote against the resolution, although he still disapproved of it. The compromise resolution was then adopted by a vote of 118 to 45. The negative vote was cast chiefly by the Bengal delegates, who desired to go all the way to a declaration of independence, and the Maharatta delegates, who did not desire to go as far as dominion status.

THE NATIONAL CONGRESS, DECEMBER 29

The compromise was agreed upon just in time for the first meeting of the Indian National Congress, which was held in the great pandal at 2 P. M. on Saturday, December 29. The " great pandal " was a large enclosure on the outskirts of Calcutta, about 80 bighars (20 acres) in size. A high wall, equipped with iron gates, kept the enclosure safe from the huge crowds which at times surged back and forth outside; and a corps of about 2000 volunteer cavalry and infantry guards, recruited from young men from many parts of India, and clad in Khaddar (home-spun khaki), but unarmed, was on duty day and night, inside and outside the wall. Within the wall was a city of tents, named after an Indian patriot, Deshabandhu Nagar. The tents were devoted to the purposes of the Congress and Convention and their various secretariats and committees. Restaurants for dispensing the various kinds of food and drink prescribed by the respective religions, and rest-rooms presided over by a volunteer medical corps and a committee of ladies, were provided and were very popular.

Adjoining the Congress Pandal, was another in which was held, from December 16 to January 5, the " All-India Exhibition " of India's agricultural and manufactured products. In countless booths were exhibited a vast variety of these products and, in many instances, the processes of making them. The popularity of those booths devoted to the spinning and weaving of cotton-cloth proved both the influence of Gandhi's precept and example, and the determination of the Indian people to become economically independent. One of the most effective sections of the exposition was that devoted to hygiene and sanitation, which showed in deadly parallel fashion, by charts, pictures and miniature villages, the wrong way and the scientific way of living the villagers' daily life.

THE NATIONAL VOLUNTEERS

The Conference on Physical Culture and the demonstrations which it staged were visited and acclaimed by multitudes, and the games and feats of strength were further evidence of Young India's determination to catch up with the rest of the world in physical prowess. The volunteer corps was hailed with especial satisfaction by the populace and the press, as an essential step in solving the political problem. One native Calcutta newspaper declared: " We are glad to learn that our National Volunteers are to appear on the Congress Pandal clad in Soldier's dress with swords hanging." The pro-British papers, on the other hand, poked fun at " the Swaraj army," and ironically demanded an official investigation of its alleged attacks upon the innocent public.

These attacks were said to have occurred on the 30th of December, when the laborers of Calcutta invaded the Congress Pandal. But an eye-witness of this occurrence declares: " I was beyond myself with joy to watch the volunteers pacifying the Lilooah workers, and can boldly assert that what was possible for the volunteers unarmed would have been very difficult for the ' guardians of law and order,' even with a charge by baton and lathi." The " hanging swords " were *not* a part of the volunteers' equipment; and certainly there was a minimum amount of coercion on their part; but, on the contrary, their courtesy and willing spirit of service were obvious and unbroken.

A large section of the people were evidently disappointed by the lack of military show and equipment in the corps of volunteers, and they hailed with proportionate satisfaction the exhibition by various athletic associations of military drill, wrestling, spear, dagger and sword play, and the use of the lathi, or long wooden staff, in which the British policemen have become so proficient.

INDIA'S NATIONAL FLAG

The Congress itself did provide one spectacle designed to make a direct appeal to the patriotic nationalism of the people. This was the ceremonial hoisting of the Indian national flag on the morning of December 28. A tall " Asoka pillar," or flag-staff, 60 feet in height was erected in the pandal, and the flag draped upon it was unfurled by Pandit Motilal Nehru, the president of the congress. Besides the volunteers, there participated in the ceremony corps of cyclists and motor-cyclists, boy scouts, ambulance physicians and nurses, and about 10,000 spectators. To these, " Men and Women, Soldiers of Swaraj," as he called them, President Nehru made a brief speech, in which he appealed to the Indian people to nerve themselves for the impending crisis. " We are about to enter," he said, " one of the most critical stages of our national existence. The national conflict demands of you all the patriotism, all the courage, all the endurance, all the energy and all the sacrifice of which you are capable. The forces opposing you are gathering their strength. You have to be ready with the greatest offering of sacrifice that you can afford to lay at the feet of the Motherland. Let your sacrifice be such that other sacrifices recorded in history may pale into insignificance before it. . . . . Remember, in the fight for freedom, discipline is the better part of valor. . . . . Also remember that the fight for freedom has only one ending, and that is glorious victory.''

This ceremony, '' unprecedented in the annals of India,'' as both its foes and friends acknowledged, was ridiculed by the former and acclaimed by the latter as full of personal inspiration and national significance. It was regarded as a fitting prelude to the first session of the National Congress which occurred the next afternoon.

THE CONGRESS TENT AND MUSIC

A tent with a capacity of 20,000 had been erected for the congress, and equipped with electric lights, microphones, and '' loud speakers.'' The electric power for these was supplied by the congress' own electric plant, which worked admirably, except at the crucial moment when Gandhi was about to address the vast audience. Most inopportunely at this crucial moment, the '' loud speakers '' failed to function and refused to be repaired for the rest of the session. Whether this was due to the deficiencies of Indian engineers, or to the '' machinations of the enemy,'' was a question much debated but not satisfactorily answered.

The decorations of the tent's interior were simple, but effective, consisting of wreaths of flowers and flags, but omitting the usual illuminated mottoes and portraits of leaders. Only a few chairs were provided for Western visitors, the vast multitude sitting unweariedly for hours in Indian fashion. The '' seats,'' or platforms, were slanted downward towards the high, ornamented rostrum. A small percentage (perhaps one-half of one per-cent) of the audience were women; very few children were present, and those under five were not admitted, except that '' infants in arms '' were brought in by their mothers and helped to lend an appearance of homely reality to the occasion. The myriad lights, the varicolored bunting, and the vast multitude of faces presented an impressive scene,—'' a scene so supreme, so sublime,'' in the words of one enthusiastic admirer, '' that it beggars description.''

The musical programme was elaborate and was participated in by a full orchestra and a chorus of 200 young men and women. The national anthem, '' Bande Mataram,'' and other patriotic songs by Tagore, Davi and Dwijendra Lal were sung with great vigor. Hostile critics ridiculed the white-coated leader of the music, who was a son of the famous singer, S. S. Davi, and declared that '' neither the orchestra nor chorus ever gave a glance at his frantic gestures, and although he was a leader led he could scarcely keep his baton in tune with the music.'' Perhaps it was due to the partiality of the audience, but the music was received with genuine enthusiasm.

THE DELEGATES

The number of delegates elected to the Congress was 6000 and at least 5220 [20] of these were in attendance. The vast majority of them could not take an active part in the proceedings either of the congress itself or of its committees; and they contented themselves with listening to and applauding the speakers, and with voting *viva voce* for or against the resolutions submitted to them. The Subjects Committee considered but rejected a proposal to reduce the number of delegates to one-half, or one-quarter; and, after the congress had adjourned, it negatived Jawaharlal Nehru's motion to reduce the number to 1000, and voted to retain the number at 6000. The committee did decide, however, to increase the fee of each delegate from one rupee to five. The cost of maintaining the Congress at its annual sessions and its permanent committees was estimated to be from ten to fifteen lakhs (one to one and a half million rupees). Hence, by delegates' fees will be raised from one thirty-third to one fiftieth of the cost, the remainder to come from individual contributions and local assessments.

[20] 5600 was the estimate of the secretaries.

When congress opened on the morning of the 29th, fully 20,000 people were seated in the great tent. President Nehru, riding in an automobile painted with the national colors, red, white and green, and escorted by a troop of volunteer cavalry, entered the pandal with a fanfare of trumpets and roll of drums. The volunteer Swaraj infantry presented arms (lathis, instead of the prohibited rifles), and the great audience arose as one man to greet his entrance to the tent.

THE CHAIRMAN'S KEY-NOTE SPEECH

After the singing of the national anthem, Mr. Sen Gupta, chairman of the Reception Committee, made an address of welcome, which *The Englishman* of Calcutta denounced as "bitterly anti-British." "His tale of Britain's treatment of subject nations," said *The Englishman*, "was an audacious travesty of history; but the moral, which was that Indians would be fools to expect to secure anything in the shape of justice from Britain except by force, was obviously to the taste of the audience. He pleaded later for the Nehru Constitution, but made it clear that he regarded it merely as a weapon in the fight for full independence."

The more moderate *Pioneer* of Allahabad referred to Mr. Sen Gupta's long speech as "75 minutes of a very mixed bag of oratory ranging from learned disquisitions upon world history—always tilting at

Britain's ' dishonesty '—economics and Indian traditions, to ultra-active politics.''

The radical Calcutta *Forward* hailed the meeting of the congress as a body which '' for more than four decades has preached the gospel of a free and united India, for 43 years has held aloft the banner of national freedom, till at last the millions of Indians have gathered under it and demanded immediate Swaraj.'' And it bade its readers remember that '' the civilization and culture of India had extorted the admiration of humanity even at a time when the forefathers of the modern ' civilized ' nations were roaming about in forests clad in the bark of trees.'' In its account of the congress session, it naturally gave high praise to Mr. Sen Gupta's speech, especially to its leaning towards independence, and stressed '' the self-examination and self-introspection '' which he pressed upon India. This last, it said, was from '' no inferiority complex ''; but. '' with a keen penetrative insight, and without fear or favour, he has exposed all the national defects that handicap us in our bargaining with Britain.''

As a matter of fact, Mr. Sen Gupta did emphasize, at several points in his speech, the weaknesses and defects of the Indian people. After speaking of India's condition before and under British rule, he summed up India's own faults as follows: '' Slavish worship of the past, communal dissensions, the caste, the purdah, polygamy, early marriage, and other cankers of the body politic are responsible for our failure. We live a life divided into compartments; our patriotism is communal; our unity amounts to mere juxtaposition. Steeped in the prejudices of a mediaeval age, with half the nation losing their vitality behind the purdah, and in its turn devitalizing the other half; disintegrated by warring castes and creeds which condemn a population more than that of the United Kingdom or Japan as untouchables, whose shadow even it is pollution to tread: can we ever expect that we shall be able to bear upon Britain the necessary pressure? In order to assert ourselves in the modern world, we must be modernized. You cannot oppose howitzers, dreadnoughts and aeroplanes with the primitive bow and arrow. What is true of the instrument is also true of the agent. The man-power of India has to be fully developed and equipped with up-to-date ideals. The women must be free. You cannot with impunity paralyse half the nation and by its dead weight handicap the other half. Is it not national *harikari* to impair the vitality of the race by screening half its number behind the purdah and accelerate the process by the horrible custom of immature parenthood? The thousand and one air-tight compartments of the social fabric should be knocked down without mercy.

" Caste must go. What purpose does it serve in the present day economy of India? The original economic purpose behind it no longer exists. It is not based on division of labour. It serves no useful purpose and exists only to emphasize meaningless, nay, harmful social distinctions—a fruitful source of hatred, jealousy and conflict—an enervating factor in national life, narrowing down the marriage circle and often resulting in the evils of near-blood marriage. Lastly, what can we expect from a people with a polygamous habit? A people so pleasure-seeking, so devoid of self-control, cannot show that self-abnegation which is so very necessary in a soldier of liberty. Unfortunately, the conservative instinct in us is so deep-rooted that the work of a previous generation is lost to the next. The life work of a Ram Mohan Roy, a Vidyaŝagar or a Vivekanand brings about some progress. But like a spring we go back to the former position. Joshua leading his people to the promised land finds them at the spot from which Moses started. There should, therefore, be a social revolution which must go hand in hand with political revolution.''

The chief burden of blame for India's condition, however, Mr. Sen Gupta naturally ascribed to British rule. '' India was a prosperous country,'' he declared, '' before the British captured the reins of her government. Her trade and industry and agriculture were in a flourishing condition; she had a big mercantile marine; she had an excellent system of primary as well as higher education; a wonderful system of irrigation, and an unobstructed drainage system. The people were healthy and free from the ravages of malaria, kala-azar, and other preventible diseases. All this changed soon after John Company became master of India and began its dual function of commerce and governance—trading like rulers and ruling like traders. It seemed as if the magic lamp of a malignant Alladin played its trick on a garden-city, turning in a trice its garden into a desert.

" The prosperity of a country depends on the prosperity of its industries. And the industries of India were broad-based and secure behind impregnable fortifications. The country had a vast fund of accumulated capital, which flowed through a well-devised system of indigenous banking, nurtured her diverse industries, and financed the movement of their products. There was an unlimited fount of skill and enterprise to a very high degree—the result of the accumulated experience of ages. The possession of an efficient mercantile marine gave the children of the soil a strong, strategic position in regard to markets, internal as well as international. To all these were added the invaluable advantage of having an abundant supply of raw materials near at hand."

After painting this glowing picture of pre-British India, the orator proceeded to indict the villain of the play. " It was not easy to destroy the industries of India," he said. " Indeed it could never be done by honest competition. Britain realized that; and, bringing to her aid the political power acquired by John Company, she applied herself assiduously to destroy the Indian industries, and to build out of their ashes her own industrial greatness." Then followed a long and stern denunciation of the British exploitation of India for the benefit of England. It was reminiscent of the list of charges piled up in the Declaration of Independence against King George the Third.

India is burdened with an ever-swelling military expenditure, so that the Army Bill of England may be reduced.

She is compelled to maintain a costly white personnel in all branches of her public services, though an equally efficient indigenous agency is available at a much lower cost, in order to provide employment for Britain's educated labor.

The public works of India are used as dumping-grounds for British manufacturers, the policy underlying the purchase of stores being neither to encourage Indian industries nor to buy in the lowest market.

The tariff, currency and loan policies of the country are directed towards the same end—stimulation of British industries and suppression of her own.

Thus runs the long indictment. Even the apparent blessings of British rule are found to be but curses. " Anglo-Indians," said Mr. Sen Gupta, " in season and out of season, sing hymns in honour of their rule, recounting its blessings. They point to the extensive railways, the magnificent ports and harbours, and the populous cities that have sprung up under the charm of British rule. They point to the increasing volume of trade that yearly passes through the ports, the favourable balance of trade, the mammoth exchange banks, the schools, colleges and hospitals. They point to all these, congratulate themselves, and exclaim: 'Look here, Indians. Look at these wonderful achievements. All these we have done for you!' But is that the whole story? True, the achievements are wonderful. But what is that to us? . . . . The British may congratulate themselves on these wonderful works, for they are their principal beneficiaries. To us they have done more harm than good. Most of our miseries, our poverty, our degradation, the impairment as well as the enslavement of our bodies and minds, are attributable to them. The main purpose for which they were brought into being was to serve British interest; and any benefit that has accrued to us is only incidental and has been far outweighed by their injurious effects—by the fact that they were devised to serve antagonistic interests and have served that end with merciless accuracy."

To prove this radical statement, the orator analysed the railway system as designed and fitted to serve Britain's military policy, with the result that there are many miles of unremunerative lines, and a loss to India of 350 crores; "the bloated volume of foreign trade, especially the enormous size of its balance of trade," as "a sign of economic anæmia, inasmuch as it does not constitute a real exportable surplus," but, on the contrary, "a drain on the annual income of India to the extent of something like 10 rupees per head of the population"; the alleged educational progress as really a retrogression both in the declining number of primary schools—in Bengal, for example, from 80,000 to 40,000—and in the increasing amount of illiteracy.

This decline of India under British rule, Mr. Sen Gupta asserted, was not due to India's refusal to coöperate with her foreign mistress. On the contrary, he declared, "India has coöperated, and indeed the policy of coöperation has been overdone. No honest man can conceive of a greater degree of coöperation than that which India has accorded to Great Britain."

"We have shown Britain good will. In doing that, we have destroyed our industries and our mercantile marine, debased our currency, and piled on our shoulders a heavy interest charge. We have shed our blood and starved our children. We have conquered for her vast territories. We have sent our men and women to develop Britain's overseas plantations, only to be kicked out as soon as their development was complete. By submitting to inhuman emigration and coolie recruiting laws we have coöperated—coöperated shamefully. If in these Britain sees good will fit for appreciation, other nations see in them incredible stupidity and an utter lack of self-respect. . . . .

"But the British people do not understand coöperation. They understand force only. . . . . Throughout history, not a single instance can be cited when Britain has dealt fairly with weaker nations. John Bright declared in tones of melancholy conviction that the House of Commons had done many things which were just, but never anything merely because it was just. . . . . Coöperation and good will on the part of the weaker nations have not only not succeeded in evoking a like sentiment in Britain, but have produced opposite results.'' This verdict the orator sought to substantiate by an appeal to Great Britain's relations with the North American Colonies, Canada, South Africa, Afghanistan, Persia, Turkey and China.

Turning again to India, Mr. Sen Gupta denounced ‘‘ British exploitation and British misrule: the growing poverty of the people; the destruction of their industries and mercantile marine; the burdening of the country with adverse military, tariff, railway, currency and loan policies; and the increase of illiteracy.''

But even good government, he insisted, would be no substitute for self-government. ‘‘ Freedom is a nation's birth-right ''; he said, ‘‘ we want freedom for its own sake, not because British rule is injurious to our trade and industries, nor because it emasculates our people and makes us pariahs in our own land. The people today are pulsating with a new life, they feel an inner urge, a burning desire for freedom, and would be satisfied with no amount of material prosperity if purchased at the cost of self-rule.''

Even domestic peace and order, and security against foreign foes, Mr. Sen Gupta declared, should not be purchased at the price of political freedom. " Sir Stanley Jackson," he said, " has denounced freedom purchased at the cost of security; but I say there is no greater calamity that can befall a nation than security purchased at the expense of freedom."

After quoting some fervent words of Cicero in behalf of freedom, he continued: " We too want life; we want realisation of our national self; and for this, peace and order purchased at the cost of freedom is the last thing that we could desire. British courts may give us justice; British police may give us security. What is this security and justice worth when not based on the free will of the nation, when they are imposed by a third party, when we have to swallow them like bitter pills whether or not we consider them real justice and security? Britain may give us railways, she may give us schools and hospitals, she may build cities of palaces, magnificent harbours and docks, develop the mineral and the forest wealth of the country, a powerful fleet of dreadnoughts, an invincible army, a wonderful air-force, posts and telegraphs, a fertilizing system of irrigation; she may give us all the text-book blessings of British rule, scope for the development of our trade and industry: she may do all these and more. But will that satisfy India? . . . .

" Materially we may be richer, apparently we may look more civilised, but in reality we shall go down and down by losing our power of initiative. These magnificent appearances would hide the dwarfed soul of the nation, its decay and approaching death. What are these wonders worth, if we only enjoy their benefits and have no hand in their planning or making? Enjoyment is not the end of life. It is not in reaping, but in sowing, that life finds its true realisation; not to sleep a comfortable sleep under the shadow of greatness, but to be great ourselves, even at the cost of restless discomfort. For this we have to go out to meet the whirlwind, to stake all our borrowed glamours and throw ourselves into the vortex of strife. . . . .

" A nation is the best manager of its own affairs. It may not manage its own affairs as efficiently as some manage theirs. But even in the worst case of misrule it has got a potentiality which far surpasses the value of all apparent peace and order and even material prosperity that others can give. In the one case, it is mechanical and in the other it is big with life and all its possibilities. British exploitation and British misrule are not the *raison d'être* of our demand for freedom; they are the obstacles in our way."

As to the means of achieving freedom, Mr. Sen Gupta frankly said: " We shall have to follow the warpath, create the spirit of resistance—call it Noncoöperation, Satyagraha, Passive Resistance, Obstruction, Civil Disobedience, or Armed Revolution, as you please. There is no other way. Britain will not yield an inch of ground unless she is compelled to do so. Nothing is more ridiculous than to look for

Swaraj towards Whitehall and expect that some fine morning a shipload of that commodity will be landed on Bombay wharf along with other consignments of British goods. India's freedom must be wrought within her own borders, by her own children. The first condition, therefore, is the self-assertion of the nation as a whole, united action with a unity of purpose. . . . . For united action a common platform, a single rallying-point, is necessary. We have got such a rallying-point in what is known as the Nehru Report.''

Referring to the conflicting ideals of Independence and Dominion Status, Mr. Sen Gupta said: '' I look upon this document [the Nehru Report], not as a begging-bowl for Dominion Status, but as a weapon in our fight for full Independence. I do not think in politics the question whether any two views are logically consistent with one another really matters. The critical question is whether the two interfere with each other, or, to put it differently, whether our efforts to achieve one of them hamper our efforts to achieve the other. All facts considered, Dominion Status far from excluding Independence as an ideal may be used as a means in furtherance of it. . . . . Take your stand on this unity which has been produced by the Nehru Report and do not, in view of the present political situation, take the risk of destroying it, in the hope that after the lapse of some time the ideal of Independence would produce a similar and perhaps a more powerful unity.''

Behind this Report, Mr. Sen Gupta declared, there must be a mobilisation of all of India's resources. And this must be preceded by a thorough self-examination and a social revolution. " We should first ask ourselves why great national movements, led by great men have failed, while success has crowned similar movements in Turkey, Persia and China. India has now as its leader the greatest man living on earth in the present generation. Why is it that the Non-coöperation Movement led by Mahatma Gandhi failed? . . . . The answer is to be sought in our national defects. . . . . The entire social fabric requires a thorough overhauling, and has to be revolutionised; no amount of tinkering, or super-imposition of piece-meal reforms, would serve our purpose." Admitting that India's religious differences were a prime obstacle to social reform and political union, Mr. Sen Gupta advised: " A frontal attack should be led on the forces of reaction. If it is found that Hindu culture means purdah, and Mahomedan culture means the harem, both must go. If Hindu culture means caste system and marriage before puberty, and Mahomedan culture means polygamy, none of them should have a place in our social polity. Mere mutual toleration for Hindu and Mahomedan culture is not enough. It is at best a negative virtue; something positive must be done, and the shackles alike of the Shariats and the Shastras should be unceremoniously cast off if they are found to stand in the way of forming a united nation."

The orator's peroration pictured, as an incentive to the struggle for freedom, India's possible future: " Let freedom be the thought of your days and the dream of your nights. Let the sons and daughters of India gather under her national standard and, with ' Equality and Fraternity ' as their battle-cry, march onward, unceasingly, tirelessly, towards the freer life of a free India. Undaunted by calamity, unmoved by the wrath and repression of the powers that be, do not despair. Marshall all your forces, and no power on earth can resist you in your triumphant march to the promised land of the Great India of the future: an India welded and federated into a powerful nation; great in art, great in science; widening the bounds of knowledge and contributing her share to the progress and civilisation of the world; mistress of the Indian Seas; leader of an Asiatic Zollverein; upholder of the rights of the coloured races throughout the world! "

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

This address of welcome and " key-note speech " was received by the Congress with a great ovation and paved the way excellently for the next address, that of the president, Pandit Motilal Nehru. The presidential address was also denounced by the pro-British newspapers as " pitched in an equally bitter racial key, although better reasoned," and as making it clear that Dominion Status is merely a weapon in the fight for the real objective, namely, Complete

Independence. The nationalist newspapers also agreed that the address was " an epoch-making announcement " and that it constituted " an ultimatum given for the first time on behalf of India to England, either to come to terms or be prepared for war, non-violent no doubt, but relentless, ceaseless, and to a finish. It is a rallying call of a general to his countrymen to unite and be prepared for a struggle for the assertion of their rights and for the attainment of their freedom." [21]

The address had been translated into Hindi and Urdu, and printed copies of it in those languages were distributed to the delegates, but its author read it in English. At the outset, he warned his auditors, not to expect from him an outburst of oratory (" anything in the nature of high idealism presented in an attractive setting of word and phrase "), but rather " a plain, matter-of-fact statement from a plain, matter-of-fact man." He warned them, also that " pure idealism completely divorced from realities has no place in politics and is but a happy dream which must sooner or later end in a rude awakening." Before " dashing out, full steam ahead, on uncharted seas," he deemed it necessary to answer the three questions: "Where do we stand? What is our destination? How can we reach our destination?"

" To make sure of where we stand, so as not to lose our bearings after we start," he entered upon an analysis of India's existing political and economic situation. " Whatever political or civil rights we possess," he said, " are in the nature of a conditional gift, enjoyable during the pleasure of our rulers. They can deprive us, and indeed have from time to time actually deprived thousands of us, of those rights at any moment, with or without reason, at their own sweet will by using the vast reserve of arbitrary power which they retain in their own hands. We have been persistently denied all opportunity for self-realisation, self-development and self-fulfilment; we have been scrupulously shut out of all effective part in the internal and external affairs of our own country."

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[21] From the *Hindustan Times,* Delhi, December 30, 1929.

Turning to " the Simon Commission," he said: " The solemn promises of responsible government have found fulfilment in that colossal fraud, the Statutory Commission, which is now careering along our streets leaving bleeding heads and broken bones behind. Nothing has so clearly brought out the cold callousness of the officials on the one hand and the utter helplessness of the people to protect themselves on the other, as the progress of this Commission from town to town." In reply to the Viceroy's recent threat that the government would take whatever steps it deemed necessary to suppress violence, Mr. Nehru asserted that India's leaders had always stood for strict non-violence (which could not possibly be carried through under similar circumstances in England); but, he declared, " history teaches us that incidents like these are symptomatic of a condition which can only be dealt with effectively by a wise and radical change of policy, and not by a resort to coercive methods. . . . . But the bureaucracy has little use for the lessons of history. The orgy of repression has already begun in the Punjab and is likely to extend at no distant date to the other provinces.''

Taking up next England's century-old economic exploitation of India, Mr. Nehru pointed to ''the costliest civic and military services in the world'' maintained at India's expense; the creation of markets in India for England's manufactures, and its accompanying methods by which '' powerful banking, commercial and industrial combines are now successfully choking off indigenous enterprise''; the manipulation of the currency, especially the forcing up of the rupee from 1 s. 4 d. to 1 s. 6 d., thus '' pinching the over-taxed cultivator of 12½ per cent in the price of the raw materials produced by him, and giving a bonus of 12½ per cent to the importer of foreign manufacture into India'' (when on the contrary the government should have '' reduced the land-tax by 12½ per cent and imposed an import duty of 12½ per cent on all goods which can be manufactured in the country'') ; and the deliberate sacrifice of Indian shipping to England's interests.

Turning to the other cause of India's weakness, Mr. Nehru emphatically said: '' While, however, the Government has to answer for a great deal, it must be frankly said that we cannot honestly acquit ourselves of all blame for our present plight. . . . . The Government is undoubtedly responsible for the prevailing ignorance and poverty among the masses and in a very large measure for the growing hostility among the classes. But it certainly is not to blame for the evils of our own social system, which has relegated millions of our people as good as ourselves to the category of untouchable and depressed classes, and has put our women under restrictions which deprive them not only of many natural rights, but also of the opportunity to render national service. Nor is the Government solely accountable for all the communal differences which have contributed a dark chapter to the recent history of our own times.''

This lack of national unity in India, Mr. Nehru deplored as bitterly as Washington and his compeers had deplored it in America in the post-revolutionary years. ‘‘ The strength or weakness of a nation depends,'' he said, ‘‘ upon the strength or weakness of the tie which keeps its component parts together. . . . . There is no overlooking the fact that we are divided into a number of large and small communities, more or less disorganised and demoralised.'' The political leaders, patriotic though they had been, he believed, were largely responsible for the many ‘‘ serious splits which have spread with lightning rapidity to the rank and file on almost every occasion when a forward move has been taken or even contemplated.''

But his most scathing censure was passed upon disunity caused by religious disputes. The Nehru Report had emphasized this evil, and had proposed political means of giving just representation to the various faiths. But the wider and more fundamental problem remained, namely: ‘‘ What place, if any, religion as practised and understood today should occupy in our public life?’’ To this question, he gave the following drastic reply: ‘‘ Whatever the higher conception of religion may be, it has in our day-to-day life come to signify bigotry and fanaticism, intolerance and narrow-mindedness, selfishness and the negation of many of the qualities which go to build a healthy society. Its chief inspiration is hatred of him who does not profess it, and in its holy name more crimes have been committed than for any professedly mundane object. Can any sane person consider the trivial and ridiculous causes of conflict between Hindu and Moslem, or between sect and sect, and not wonder how any one with a grain of sense should be affected by them?

‘‘ The aim of all education and progress is to develop the collective instinct in man; to teach him to coöperate with his neighbour; and to make him feel that his individual good depends on the good of society as a whole. Only thus can the selfish and individualistic instincts be suppressed and the energy of mankind be diverted from mutual competition to coöperation for the common good.

"Religion as practised today is, however, the greatest separatist force; for it puts artificial barriers between man and man and prevents the development of healthy and coöperative national life. Not content with its reactionary influence on social matters, it has invaded the domain of politics and economics, and affects every aspect of our life. Its association with politics has been to the good of neither. Religion has been degraded and politics has sunk into the mire. Complete divorce of one from the other is the only remedy."

Closing this first part of his address in answer to the question, where do we stand, Mr. Nehru said: "The brief outline I have given above will show that we stand at present in the thickest part of the woods. We suffer from two sets of serious disabilities—those imposed upon us by foreign rule, and those of our own making. The two sets of disabilities together form a vicious circle around us and we stand in the center, heavily handicapped by one in trying to get rid of the other. We have to break through the vicious circle before we can hope to get out of the woods."

To the second question, what is our destination, Mr. Nehru replied: "My answer straight and simple is Freedom in substance, and not merely in form, by whatever name you call it. . . . I am for complete Independence—as complete as it can be; but I am not against full Dominion Status—as full as any dominion possesses it today—provided I get it before it loses all attraction. I am for severance of the British connection as it subsists with us today, but am not against it as it exists with the dominions.''

The critical conflict being waged between these two ideals of Independence and Dominion Status led Mr. Nehru to devote a large part of his address to an attempt to bridge the gulf between them. '' Dominion Status involves,'' he claimed, '' a very considerable measure of freedom bordering on complete independence, and is any day preferable to complete dependence. . . . . Whether it is to be Dominion Status or complete Independence will depend upon whether the conditions then prevailing are similar to those of Ireland or to those of the United States of America at the time when each came into what she now has. . . . . Whatever the ultimate goal, we must be prepared to traverse the same thorny path to reach it. If we are not so prepared, Independence will ever be an idle dream and Dominion Status an ever receding will-o'-the-wisp. . . . . Dominion Status is passed on the way to Independence; and if it is refused, you have simply to press on to your destination, which must always be Independence. . . . . Organisation is as necessary for those who desire Dominion Status as it is for those who work for complete Independence. That being so, the obvious course is to work together up to the point the weakest of us is ready to go; if he is not disillusioned by the time we reach that point, let us leave him there and forge ahead. . . . . Great Britain has the whip-hand today, and the psychological moment for her to offer, and for India to accept, full Dominion Status, has arrived. If Great Britain will not avail herself of the opportunity, India will have the whip-hand tomorrow, and then will come the psychological moment for her to wrest complete Independence from Great Britain. No offer of Dominion Status will then be acceptable. . . . . Our destination, then, is Freedom, the form and extent of which will depend upon the time when, and the circumstances under which, it comes.''

The socialists' or communists' answer to the question, Whither India, had been brought forward so prominently in Calcutta and elsewhere, that Mr. Nehru devoted a portion of his address to arguing against it. '' There are those,'' he said, '' who will not look at Dominion Status, but hope to create sanctions under existing conditions for the equitable distribution of wealth by abolishing personal rights in property and so regulating the incidence of taxation as to prevent both great wealth and great poverty. While they are themselves heavily chained, they aspire to wipe out imperialism from the face of the earth. Countries which have enjoyed complete independence for centuries have not yet been able to accomplish even a fraction of their ambitious programmes. The example of the Russian revolution is trotted out, in season and out of season, as if conditions prevailing in India were the same as those which enabled Russia to shake off her old régime. But even in Russia, there is no such thing as equal distribution of wealth. Lenin's N. E. P. (New Economic Policy) has brought into existence a class of 'Well-to-do peasants,' and the advocates of strict equality are rotting in exile. It is forgotten that the spectre of a counter-revolution is still haunting those at the helm of the Soviet Government and driving them, in the name of the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, to commit acts which are the negation of the elementary rights of free citizens. The most that can be said is that Russia is trying a great experiment. One may even be willing to connive at the means employed to secure the great end. But the ultimate success or failure of the experiment is on the knees of the gods, and it is too early yet to rely on the example of Russia as a historical precedent.''

As to the socialists or communists in India, Mr. Nehru charged that their proposed '' mass organisation and mass action '' was nothing new, but merely Gandhi's '' old formula of progressive non-violent non-coöperation on the political side, and the raising of the depressed classes and the emancipation of women, on the social side. . . . They say that Dominion Status will not destroy imperialism; nor will complete Independence do it. It has not done it in many other countries of the world. There is no doubt that full-blooded socialism will do it. But to seek to establish full-blooded socialism in a country lying prostrate and heavily chained at the feet of its exploiters is to cry for the moon.''

To the argument of the anti-imperialists that Dominion Status would be an unholy alliance with the imperialist combine of the British Commonwealth of Nations against the oppressed and exploited nations of the world, Mr. Nehru replied: '' It so happens that at the present moment we are not less oppressed and exploited than any other nation; and I do not see why, once we get rid of that oppression and exploitation, we should lend a willing hand in oppressing and exploiting others. It is true that those who enjoy Dominion Status at present are carrying on their own little games of exploitation because it suits them to do so. But there can be no possible compulsion on India to resort to it, provided only the legal status acquired is as full as that enjoyed by the dominions. It is now settled beyond dispute that the dominions are not bound to join England in her wars if they are not so inclined.''

Turning finally to his third question, Mr. Nehru outlined the methods by which India could attain its goal. He urged strongly the acceptance by the Congress of the Nehru Report as embodying a constitution based upon '' the highest common agreement '' among all parties, and supported by '' the consensus of opinion in the country.'' The only alternative, he insisted, would be for the Congress, '' after bringing the parties together, to send them back to the wilderness in isolated groups, each to shift for itself, and leave the Congress to wrangle over the respective merits of complete Independence and Dominion Status to the end of time.'' He did not elaborate this point, but in his peroration made the appeal: '' Begin at the point at which the All-Parties have now arrived, push forward with them as far as they would go, then pause and take stock of your equipment, and finally throw the strength of your whole being into one great effort to reach the goal. . . . . The first and the most obvious step is to set our own house in order. For this purpose, rally all the parties under the banner of the Congress and prepare to march shoulder to shoulder with them to the farthest end of the common road.''

As a practical leader, Mr. Nehru did not close his address without specifying more precisely the programme of work which he visualized. This included, —first, the collection of a large sum of money, from rich and poor, the Indian princes, commercial and industrial magnates, the great Zamindars, and government servants; and second, the organization by the Congressmen themselves of a campaign of education in behalf of the following essential tasks: the solution of the communal problem; the emancipation of the untouchables and the depressed classes; the boycott of foreign cloth and the substitution of khaddar; the crusade against purdah and the other disabilities of women, and against all other social customs which retard social intercourse and national growth, especially '' the drink and opium curse.''

This campaign of education should be conducted, he said, in the press, on the platform, and by lectures carried from village to village.

In recognition of the great Women's Social Conference which was in session in Calcutta at the time of his address, and desirous of strengthening women's share in the solution of India's political problem, Mr. Nehru made one of his last appeals as follows: " The purdah and the other disabilities of women are a curse which we should wipe out without delay. If woman is the better half of man, let us men assist them to do the better part of the work of national uplift. To get rid of purdah and to reorganize domestic life, no money is needed. Every individual can and should do his best."

As to the untouchables, he said: " Untouchability must be abolished altogether, so far as Congressmen are concerned; and no person who refuses to associate with untouchables as his equals should be permitted to belong to any Congress organisation."

His final appeal was to the Youth of India. " I have no quarrel," he said, " with the ideals of the younger men, nor with the practical work they have laid out for themselves. I hold with them that all exploitation must cease, and all imperialism must go. But the way to do it is a long and dreary one. They know that, and have themselves pointed it out. The work before the young and the old is one and the same. Only the mentality is different. Let the younger men by all means retain their own mentality; but let them not, for the sake of the very motherland they seek to serve, divide the country into more factions and parties than there are already. To the older men I repeat the same advice. Let us sink our differences. Let us march shoulder to shoulder, and victory is ours!''

The half-hour preceding President Nehru's address had been interrupted by the advent of various delegations who claimed that they had not been accorded the rightful number of seats in the Congress; and the address itself was interrupted by several minutes of cheering and disorder, when it was erroneously reported that ‘‘ Gandhi is here!'' But for the most part, the address was listened to in profound silence, and was universally acclaimed as an able and lucid argument in support of the Nehru Report and Dominion Status. The *Rangoon Daily News,* for example, characterized it as ‘‘ a practical speech, from the point of view of a practical statesman, wedded to sane and practical methods of realising national aspirations. The address appeals to us not only because it has unequivocally declared itself in favour of full Dominion Status within the British Commonwealth of Nations, but also because it outlines a modest programme of national reconstruction.''

The *Tribune,* of Lahore, commented: ‘‘ Pandit Nehru has the rare knack of never touching a subject without illuminating it. . . . . The address is the latest considered pronouncement of a statesman of the first rank on the most vital, the most burning of all current issues made from the platform of the greatest of our national organisations.'' The *Leader*, of Allahabad, called it '' a sustained and powerful plea for the acceptance of the constitution . . . . and of the goal of Dominion Status, on which it is based. It is the address of one who has been through the thickest of political fights, has had ample experience of public life, has acquired intimate knowledge of the strength and the weakness of his countrymen and the complexity of the problem with which the country is faced, has given evidence of his unflinching courage and patriotism, and has applied his great intellectual powers to find a practical way out of the present morass. The *Pioneer*, of Allahabad, said: '' It is impossible to read the speech of Pandit Motilal Nehru without feelings of deep admiration and sympathy. . . . . It is impossible also, with the knowledge of the charming personality of Punditje, not to feel that here is another example in the history of evolution of democracy of an aristocrat, an intellectual and natural born Whig, exercising natural born powers of leadership in the hour of his country's need.'' Even the radical *Forward* praised it as a statesmanlike utterance, although it editorially deplored the relinquishment of the ideal of Independence as the immediate next step.

THE SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, DECEMBER 29

This ideal of Independence had been championed in a brief speech, before the Subjects Committee on the 28th, by Mr. Subhas Bose, who had desired to make a longer speech in favour of it when he was precluded by the motion for cloture. After the Committee adjourned, he gave out a statement to the press, in which he said: " I wanted to have my say at today's meeting and actually sent in a note to the President, but owing to the cloture motion being carried I was prevented from doing so. Later on, I attempted to make my position clear by means of a statement, but unfortunately I was gagged by the President." Professing to speak in the name of the Bengalese, and especially of Young India—he being the Commander-in-Chief of the Volunteers—his statement continued: " I would like to make it perfectly clear at the outset that so far as I am concerned I do not desire to vote against the resolution or to stand in the way of our older leaders." Nevertheless, he criticised Gandhi's compromise resolution as being self-contradictory, and deplored Nehru's failure to side with the younger element in the Congress. He insisted that non-violent non-coöperation, or some better " sanctions," should be resorted to before December 31, 1929, so as to compel the British to grant Dominion Status; and prophesied that it would only be by the adoption of some " bold and defiant policy," some " fighting programme of action," that the Congress could retain the whole-hearted coöperation of the Youth Congress and the Independence League. " The responsibility which has been cast on the youths of this country,'' his statement concluded, '' is very great, and they have to prepare themselves for the task that lies ahead. My faith in them is unbounded; and I have no doubt that if the older leaders fail to rise to the occasion, the younger generation will march ahead and lead the country on to the cherished goal of freedom.''

When the Subjects Committee met on the evening of the 29th, after the adjournment of the Congress, President Nehru replied to this statement of Mr. Bose by saying: '' I should have preferred to make my statement in the presence of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose; but I find not only he, but as far as I can see no member of the Subjects Committee from Bengal is present at this meeting. . . . . As regards the charge that I gagged him, ... when closure was adopted on Mr. Gandhi's resolution, ... I permitted Mr. Bose at his request to make a personal statement. In the course of his statement, he began to deal with the merits of the resolution. I would have allowed him to go on, if left to myself, but three members from different sides of the House objected that after the closure motion no speech on the resolution should be made. Being called upon to give a ruling on the point, I gave the ruling as I conceived it to be correct. . . . . As to the resolution itself, it has been adopted by you, and it will be before the Congress tomorrow. . . . . Discussion of the resolution will begin tomorrow. I do not want that delegates assembled in the Congress should proceed to business with a preconceived prejudice against their president that he is a person who is in the habit of gagging.''

GANDHI'S PROGRAMME OF ACTION

Mr. Nehru's statement was received by the committee with confirmatory applause; and the committee proceeded to ‘‘ the creation of sanctions,'' or the adoption of a programme of action for the coming year. This programme was presented by Mr. Gandhi in a series of resolutions, which provided, first, for a nation-wide effort, official and unofficial, ‘‘ to bring about the total prohibition of intoxicating drugs and drinks,'' the picketing of liquor and drug shops being specified as part of this effort; second, ‘‘ the boycott of foreign cloth by advocating and stimulating the production of handspun and handwoven khaddar ''; third, the non-violent redress of local grievances against the Government, as in the recent case of Bardoli; fourth and fifth, the complete organisation of the National Congress by the enlistment of members, the enforcement of discipline, and the guidance of constructive work on the part of members of the national and provincial legislatures; sixth, the emancipation of women and the increase of their share in the national upbuilding; seventh, the promotion of drastic social reforms; eighth, the removal of untouchability and the uplift of the untouchables; ninth, the reconstruction of village life;

tenth, the enlistment of the coöperation of all classes in the nationalist movement.

To finance this far-reaching programme, Mr. Gandhi proposed that every Congressman with a minimum monthly income of 100 rupees should contribute 5 per cent of his monthly income to the national fund; provided that in special cases exception might be granted by the Working Committee.

Supporting his resolution in a brief speech, Mr. Gandhi appealed for the " utmost concentration and integrity " in the work of the ensuing twelve months. Mr. Satyamurthi moved, as an additional preamble to Mr. Gandhi's resolution, the words " [With a view to devise sanctions to enforce the nation's will], and with a view to organise the people for resistance to foreign domination, this Congress is of opinion that the country should be prepared for civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes." He also advocated the adoption of " an economic programme, to be drafted by the All India Congress Committee," this being necessary for the enlistment of " the hungry and naked millions, as the supreme sanction of Swaraj in this country "; and, further, the increase and better organisation of the National Volunteer Force, without which the work of the Congress could never be done.

Mrs. Besant opposed, as always, she said, the preparation for civil disobedience and the non-payment of taxes. Messrs. Jawaharlal Nehru, Pattabhoi Sitaramiah, Ramadas Paptulu, V. L. Sastri and Govindavallabh Pant offered minor amendments. But Mr. Gandhi observed that none of them made any material addition to the resolution; and when they were put to a vote, they were all defeated, and the original resolution was adopted by a large majority. Supporting his original resolution in a final speech, Mr. Gandhi said that he did not anticipate that the 5 per cent contribution would last forever, but for one year only; that it would prove to be an effective test as to what the nation was capable of doing, and an acid test of the sincerity and patriotism of the Congressmen.

The National Congress, December 30

THE LABORERS' PETITION

The " next step " and the means of taking it having been agreed upon by the Subjects Committee, the second meeting of the Congress was held on December 30, at 4.00 P. M. The hour that had been agreed upon was 2.00 P. M., but several thousands (estimated from 20,000 to 30,000) laborers belonging to trades unions in Calcutta and its suburbs (chiefly members of the Calcutta Port Trust Union, the E. I. Railway Union, the Bengal Jute Workers' Association, and the Calcutta Tramway Union), marched in procession to the Congress pandal, carrying posters with such inscriptions as " Victory to the Red Army," " Long Live the Independent Socialist Republic of India," and demanded the right of holding a meeting in it and of being addressed by their " revered national leaders." The volunteer guards at the Calcutta Exposition had induced the weary marchers to pass on to the Congress pandal; but the volunteers there naturally objected to its being used by the laborers at that time, since it was near the hour when the Congress itself was to assemble. The laborers forced their way through the gates, and rallying under the folds of the National Flag renewed their demand. " Victory to the Congress Flag," " Victory to the Red Army," " Victory to the Poor Raj," " Victory to Raja Jawaharlal," " Victory to Subash Chandra Bose," they shouted. An ugly clash was prevented at this juncture by an agreement on the part of the leaders of the Congress and the laborers that the Congress meeting should be postponed for an hour while the laborers were holding their meeting in the pandal. The latter were accordingly admitted within the gates; Nehru was chosen to preside over their meeting; and his father made a conciliatory address, reminding his auditors that he had already expressed sympathy with the cause of labor in his presidential address, had invited their leader, Mr. K. C. Mitter, to participate in the Congress proceedings, and assured them of his continued sympathy and support.

After a few other brief speeches by labor leaders (Nimbkar, Joglekar and K. C. Mitter), and the distribution of a letter demanding of the Congress aid for strikers in Bauria, a grant of Rs. 25,000 for labor organisation in each province, and an equal number of labor leaders in the Working Committee, the following resolution was unanimously adopted: " This mass meeting of workers and peasants from all industries declare that we workers and peasants of land shall not rest content till complete independence is established and all exploitation from and all forms of imperialism cease. We do call upon the National Congress to keep that goal before them and organise the national forces for that purpose."

By this time, the hour agreed upon for the laborers' meeting and three quarters of an hour in addition had expired, and the Congress officials became very anxious to get rid of their uninvited guests. Fortunately, at this crisis, Mr. Gandhi arrived at the pandal and was recived by the laborers with a great ovation. After making them a brief address of mingled sympathy and admonition, Mr. Gandhi requested them to retire from the tent and outside the gates, and with this request they contentedly and peacefully complied.

This incident, however, was so significant of potential disaster to the nationalist cause, that Mr. Nehru deemed it wise to recognize the justice of the laborers' " petition in boots," or " hunger parade," by adding to the printed version of his presidential address two paragraphs, in which he declared: " The Congress has all along indentified itself with the cause of Labour, and Congressmen have uniformly coöperated with the leaders of the Labour movement in India in bringing about an improvement in the economic and social conditions of Labour and in supporting its claim for an equal voice with capital or other interests in the solution of our political and economic problems. . . . . The Congress can no longer afford to ignore these deplorable happenings [the Government's charge of "Communism," and its violence exercised against strikers in Bombay and elsewhere], and the time has arrived when the Congress should actively intervene and take steps to secure the just demands of Labour and take it upon itself to strengthen their organisation as a part of the work of national consolidation."

MARKING TIME

The laborers having left the Congress pandal, the Congress itself began its session at 4.00 P. M. on the 30th, and adjourned two hours later. The presidential procession, orchestral music, and the singing of the national anthem by a choir of 200 boys and girls, preceded as on the first day the proceedings. Motilal Nehru presided; but his more lusty-voiced son, Jawaharlal, in his capacity as secretary, read the various messages and resolutions that were presented.

The messages included greetings from many individuals and organisations in the Old World and the New. Romain Rolland, Madame Sun Yat-Sen and Mrs. Sorojini Naidu (a former president of the Congress, who spent the Winter of 1928-29 in the

United States) were among the individuals; and the Educational Workers' International, of Paris, the Hola Charaoni of Medina, the National Council of the Independent Labour Party, the German Preparatory Committee for a World Federation of Youth for Peace, the Persian Socialist Party, French Indo-China and Portuguese Goa branches of the Indian National Congress, were among the organisations from whom messages were received. The secretary also declared his belief that many other messages from Egypt, Palestine, Syria and elsewhere had been intercepted by the Government and suppressed. Some delegates from the Punjab took exception to the reading of these messages in English, and for some time much noise and confusion prevailed. President Nehru quieted the tumult, however, by requesting Congress to observe the same order and dignity that had been shown by the laborers who had just vacated the Congress pandal. He asserted his right as president to conduct the meetings as he deemed most suitable, and said that as many delegates could not understand Urdu or Hindi he would have English supplemented by various Indian languages when it seemed desirable. He then moved a resolution of condolence on the death of three ex-presidents of the Congress, namely, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Lala Lajpat Rai, and Lord Sinha, and three of its prominent leaders, namely, Sri Maganlal Gandhi, Sri Gopabandhu Das and Sri Gopal Krishna Ayer.

This resolution was adopted unanimously by a rising vote; and another was offered and adopted which condemned the Government for the attack by the Lahore police upon Lala Lajpat Rai, while leading a boycott procession on the arrival of the Simon Commission. This resolution was made the occasion of much fervent oratory on the part of delegates (among them, Sardar Singh Kabishar, Sett Govindas, and Mohammad Alam) who had also taken part in the procession and had shared in or witnessed the attack upon Rai. They declared that his death, shortly following the deliberate and unprovoked attack, was due to it; that he had died a martyr in the nation's battle for freedom; that the Government had refused Dr. Alam's request in the Punjab Council to institute an impartial inquiry into the affair, because its conscience was not clear; that, though the Congress still adhered to non-violence, the Government should be given a timely warning that " there is such a thing as action and reaction which is the elementary law of mechanics," and that if the Government continued such brutal attacks on orderly crowds as in Lahore, Lucknow and Cawnpore—if " hirelings of the Government, paid out of Indian taxes continued to insult and beat Indian leaders "—" an atmosphere of responsive violence was bound to be created." Professor Nripendra Nath Bannerjee, supporting the resolution " on behalf of Bengal and the youth of Bengal," declared that the Congress " should devise a method by which the systematic exploitation and kill-ing should be stopped ''; that it should '' no longer argue about Dominion Status or Independence, but should devise a sanction and create an army of national volunteers who, if mandated upon, could also retaliate.'' These sentiments were supported in a speech by a woman delegate, Sm. Jotirmayee Ganguli, on behalf of the women of Bengal; and the resolution was carried unanimously and with enthusiasm.

In the midst of this patriotic fervor, the Congress adjourned its second session to meet again on December 31, at 2.00 P. M.

The All Parties Convention, December 30

Meanwhile, on the morning of the 30th (according to adjournment on the 28th), the All Parties Convention had reassembled. President Nehru suggested at the outset of the meeting that, in order to save the Convention's time, discussion of the Subjects Committee's resolution on the Nehru Report be deferred until it had been adopted by the Congress. Thereupon, several members raised the point of order that the Nehru Report should not be presented to the Congress until the Convention had passed upon it, and that the Subjects Committee's resolution was not binding upon the Convention. Mr. Gaurisankar Miara and Dr. Ansari argued, however, that unless the resolution were adopted by the Congress, it would be binding upon no one. This argument was accepted by the Convention, and discussion of the resolution was deferred until after the Congress had passed upon it. After the secession of the Sikh delegates and the subsequent discussion of the problem of communalism (which have been recorded above [22]), the Convention adjourned until the next morning.

THE SUBJECTS COMMITTEE, DECEMBER 30

On the evening of the 30th, the Subjects Committee of the Congress reassembled. Mr. Gandhi was observing his usual weekly silence of 24 hours, which he began at three, instead of at eight o'clock on Sunday afternoon, so that he might participate in the meeting of the Congress on Monday afternoon. In his absence, his resolutions were not further discussed in the committee meeting itself; but the lobbies were buzzing with rumors that the Independence Party would endeavor to defeat Dominion Status in the next meeting of the Congress. The Bengal delegation, led by Sj. Subhas Bose, circulated a proposed amendment to Mr. Gandhi's compromise resolution which advocated complete and immediate Independence and the acceptance of the Nehru Report except for Dominion Status. A motion was offered in the Committee meeting itself by Mr. Satyamurthi that the Congress should adopt complete national Independence as India's immediate goal; but President Nehru ruled that this motion could now be made only in the Congress itself.

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[22] See pp. 55-59.

RESURGENCE OF INDEPENDENCE

This resurgence of the spirit of Independence in the Congress committee, and of military fervor in the Congress itself, had been promoted by meetings on the same day, December 30, of the Independence League and the All-India Volunteers' Conference (the Hindustani Sevadal).

The Bengal delegates to the Congress had decided, on the evening of the 29th, to put forward the amendment stated above; hence an emergency meeting of the Independence League was called the next morning to ratify it. The President of the League, Mr. Srinivas Iyengar, resisted the demand that the Bengal amendment be supported in the Congress by all the delegates who were members of the League; and he reminded the meeting that the compromise resolution had been agreed to after full consultation with Mr. Subhash Chandra Bose and other Bengal delegates. The debate grew so warm that, it was rumored, Mr. Iyengar resigned the presidency; but this rumor was denied, and the meeting ended on the understanding that every delegate was to use his individual discretion in the Congress, so far as the League was concerned.

THE VOLUNTEERS' CONFERENCE

The Volunteers' Conference (the fifth of its kind) met also on the morning of the 30th in the Congress pandal. Mr. Nripendra Chandra Banerjee, chairman of the reception committee, made an address of welcome, in which he said: " India is now out on the high-roads of adventure in quest of full-fledged national independence. . . . . Dominion Status is internal autonomy within the British imperialistic ring, and Independence is autonomy in all branches of national well-being and security outside of British control and suzerainty. I stand for the latter, although I have no quarrel with those who strive for a nearer and more immediate goal. Time alone can show whether even Dominion Status for India can be attained without the creation of irresistible sanctions. . . . . The mandates given by the All-Parties Convention and the National Congress have to be enforced; and the only way they may be enforced is by the creation of a permanent All-India Corps of National Volunteers, auxiliary to and controlled by the National Congress. Every member of this corps, officer and private, will have to take a pledge of loyalty to Congress and accept its creed and ideals, and push on the programmes of work Congress may adopt from time to time. The organisation will practically be a federal one, giving great latitude to the provinces. It is to be a fighting organisation, but not equipped with powder and shot. I am not quite sure in my own mind whether the organisation will be absolutely non-violent in thought and word; but, so far as I can visualise the near future, it is bound to be absolutely non-violent in deed,—prepared to face lathi, baton and even machine-gun charges from hostile organisations based on militarism; ready to die, but not anxious to answer charge with charge, certainly not eager to kill. . . . . Panic-mongers need not take alarm; grasshoppers in the fern need not buzz; the alien conqueror need not get worried. We are not going to emulate Sir Edward Carson's feats in Ulster, nor turn out a band of India Black Shirts, nor indulge in the humorous amenities of the Ku Klux Klan. We shall not kill or maim our adversaries; but ours shall be the nobler, the more risky, path of passive suffering linked to active service and propaganda.''

Among the active services which Mr. Banerjee pointed out for the Volunteers, were first aid, rural sanitation, and the removal of illiteracy, social wrong and economic inequality. His eminently pacific but well-received address was followed by one from Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, the president of the Conference and ‘‘ the General Officer Commanding the Bengal Congress Volunteer Corps,'' whom Mr. Banerjee introduced as one who ‘‘ needs no introduction to any audience in India—wise and cultured beyond his years, tested in the furnace of suffering, approved by his sacrifice, resourceful, energetic, brave, with a splendid passion for work and capacity for organisation, and withal saturated with love and geniality; he has deeply impressed himself on the affections, not only of Bengal, but of the whole of India, ... and he will be able to give a significant lead to us all and unfold a new chapter in the history of the Volunteer Movement.''

Mr. Bose's presidential address was a short one and was devoted almost entirely to stressing the need of a body of disciplined volunteers. ''Our day to day experiences,'' he said, '' and the testimony of the history of other nations tell us how great is the need of a Volunteer organisation. In a dependent country like ours, discipline is what we want most of all, if we are to achieve anything great. Along with discipline, we have to inculcate virtues like fearlessness, fortitude, selflessness, esprit de corps, etc. All these virtues have to be instilled into our hearts through our Volunteer organisations. . . . . Once these virtues are acquired, the whole country will feel proud of our Volunteers, as other nations feel proud of their national armies. . . . . There must be a coördination between the youth and physical culture movement, which is rapidly expanding all over the country, and the Volunteer movement.''

Unexpectedly, from such a foremost advocate of Independence and direct action, Mr. Bose did not refer in this speech either to Independence or to the duties of the Volunteers in achieving it. But one resolution adopted by the conference appealed to him and his lieutenants to make the Volunteer Corps which they had organised '' a nucleus of the future National Militia in Bengal ''; and another required every local branch of the volunteers to '' hoist the Swaraj Flag in a convenient place and . . . . attend a rally at that place once every month at 8.00 A. M. on the last Sunday of every month, sing Bande Mataram, salute the Flag, and disperse.''

PROGRAMME OF ACTION

It was evident that, on the whole, the younger element in Calcutta were awaiting a definite lead from their elders. Their elders, in the meeting of the Subjects Committee on the evening of the 30th, were not yet ready, as has been seen above, to give this definite lead. While a strong undercurrent of discussion on Independence and '' direct sanctions '' was flowing through the minds and the private conversations of its members, the committee proceeded with its attempt to strengthen in other ways the hands of the Congress. A motion offered by Swami Kumarananda for the appointment of a committee to prepare a scheme for the organisation of the masses was ruled out of order as being inconsistent with Mr. Gandhi's compromise resolution. But a motion offered by Jawaharlal Nehru, on behalf of the Provincial Congress Committee of the United Provinces, to increase India's '' contacts with other countries and peoples who also suffer under Imperialism and desire to combat it,'' was received with more favor.

Mr. J. Nehru, supporting the motion, pointed out that its adoption would mean the beginning of a department of foreign affairs, and that it was fully justified by the communications read in the Congress that morning from many organizations abroad. The motion was unanimously adopted, and was followed by one offered by Mr. Satyamurthi directing the Working Committee to establish agencies in the other Asiatic nations for the purpose of promoting trade, cultural and political relations among them, these agencies to be established especially at Kabul, Teheran, Constantinople, Moscow, Nanking, Tokio, New York, Berlin, Paris and London. After a discussion of the expense involved in the establishment of first-class agencies in these many and distant centers, Mr. Satyamurthi withdrew his motion and the task of developing foreign relations was left, in accordance with the first resolution, to the discretion of the Working Committee.

Mr. Satyamurthi moved next that " This Congress respectfully invites the people of China to coöperate with the people of India and other Asiatic countries in forming an Asiatic Federation to liberate the East from the imperialistic grip of the West, and that the Working Committee do correspond with the leaders and representatives of the other Asiatic nations and take other steps to summon the first session of a Pan-Asiatic Federation in India in 1930." This resolution was opposed by one or two delegates as adding too large a task to that which they were undertaking in India itself. But it was supported by Mr. Viswanatha, as being a necessary step to prevent the " complete enslavement of the coloured races by the white race," and by Dr. Annie Besant, as helping to prevent an inter-racial war. Put to the vote, it was almost unanimously carried; and the Congress itself soon afterwards adopted it unanimously, in response to a stirring appeal by Mr. Satyamurthi.

In order further to strengthen the ties which bound the Orient together, Mr. M. Tayyabulla moved "That this Congress sends its warmest greetings and hearty congratulations to the people of China on their having attained their complete and full freedom and nationhood, and on their having ended the era of foreign domination in their country." This motion was vigorously opposed by Messrs. J. Nehru, Joglekar, Nimbkar and S. K. Chatterji, on the ground that China's situation was still complicated by native militarism and capitalism—which was a menace to India—and by the foreign domination of the Japanese, Christians and British. Equally vigorous support of the motion was given by Messrs. P. S. Ayya, Sastri, and Satyamurthi, who insisted that China's great struggle and partial success in throwing off at least British imperialism should receive the recognition of India, suffering under the same imperialism. In response to this appeal, the motion was carried. But a motion offered by Mr. Bushia Ahmed of Madras and Mr. Satyamurthi, that the Amir of Afghanistan should be congratulated on the reform and modernization of Afghanistan, was defeated,—partly because as Mr. Nimbkar said, the Indian people were themselves going back to khaddar, and chiefly because the fate of the Amir and his government was at that time still hanging in the balance, with the probabilities of success against him.

Another " foreign " resolution, offered by Mr. Tayyabulla, was adopted, providing that warmest greetings should be sent to the peoples of Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Iraq, and " assurances of full sympathy with them in their struggle for emancipation from the grip of Western imperialism which is, in the opinion of the Congress, a great menace to India's struggle for freedom." And on the motion of Mr. J. Nehru, it was resolved to authorize the Working Committee to appoint a representative to attend the Second World Congress of the League against Imperialism, to be held in Paris, in 1930.

Finally, to reassure India's neighbors of its own peaceful policy towards them, Mr. J. Nehru moved a resolution declaring that the people of India have no quarrel with neighboring states, or other nations; and that the present government of India in no way represents the people, but on the contrary has adopted the traditional policy of making preparations for war, nominally to protect India's frontiers, but in reality to hold India's people under subjection and to conquer India's neighbors. To this, Mr. R. S. Nimbkar moved the addition that all possible means should at once be taken to organise the country, in case any war should be declared, for complete non-coöperation with the government, so as to paralyse the military machine and the transport and supply industries. This addition was ruled out as infringing upon Mr. Gandhi's pending resolution; but the original motion was unanimously carried, both by the Committee and at the subsequent meeting of the Congress, after fervent speeches, by Dr. Ansari and Dr. Saffiuddin Kitchlew.

Having put India's foreign affairs in train, the Subjects Committee turned to the more immediate problem of India's internal problem. Mr. Nimbkar, on behalf of the Bombay provincial committee, moved two resolutions, first, that " all foreign cloth in general and British goods in particular " should be boycotted—which was adopted without opposition;[23] and, second, " that in the interest of making India's demand for Swaraj more effective and more telling, and in the interest of cheapening food-stuffs in the country in these days of extreme poverty, this Congress resolves that a strict stoppage of export of all food-stuffs be adopted by the country." The motion also provided for an appeal to all dealers in food-stuffs to make all necessary sacrifices for carrying through this non-exportation agreement for at least one year, and for the appointment of a committee to enforce it.

This motion was opposed by Sirdar Sardul Singh of the Punjab, and by other speakers, on the ground that it would entail excessive suffering upon the producers of food-stuffs in the Punjab and elsewhere; and it was defeated. Another motion offered by Mr.

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[23] The Congress subsequently adopted it by a large majority, after vigorous speeches by Mr. Biswanatham, Mr. Akhil Chandra Dutt, and Mr. R. K. Chakravarthy.

Nimbkar, providing for an "emphatic protest against the Trades Disputes Bill and the Public Safety Bill which it regards as a wholly reactionary attempt to restrict the growth of the organised labour movement, and as an absolutely unjustifiable infringement upon the rights of the people," was warmly received and adopted.

The rights of labor having thus been vindicated, those of the Indian princes were brought up in a resolution offered by Sirdar Sardul Singh, providing for the condemnation of the persistent persecution of the ex-Maharajah of Nabha, who had been interned by the Indian government in Kodal Kanal, under Regulation 3 of the Act of 1818. The resolution declared that his treatment was unjust, unconstitutional and vindictive, and offered "the sympathy of the Congress to the Maharajah and his family in the grave wrong done them." Mr. Sham Sunder Chakravarthi supported this motion, and told how the government had deposed the maharajah, confiscated his property and interned him, simply because he had shown his independence and uncompromising patriotism by aiding the Akali Movement, contributing generously to the Tilak Memorial Fund, and rendering other services to his country. On the other hand, Sri Prakasam declared that if he could have his way he would confiscate the property of most of the maharajahs, and that this maharajah was still in the enjoyment of Rs. 10,000 per month, while the masses were suffering. Mr. J. Nehru also said that a resolution of congratulation to a maharajah always rubbed him the wrong way; but that the treatment of this maharajah had certainly been " unjust, unconstitutional, and vindictive," and there was no reason why the Congress should not condemn it, even though they did not like maharajahs. After omitting the expression of sympathy, the resolution was adopted.

The next resolution, moved by Mr. J. Nehru, on behalf of the Congress Committee of the United Provinces, congratulated the people on their successful boycott of the Simon Commission; appealed to them to make the boycott complete and effective in the provinces which the Simon Commission had yet to visit; denounced those individuals and associations who coöperated as witnesses or in other ways with it as being largely " responsible for the gory progress of the Commission," and called upon the people " to politically and socially boycott " it; congratulated the people of Lahore and Lucknow who, " despite the brutal and savage attacks of the police, maintained discipline and peacefully continued their boycott demonstrations and thus triumphed over official lawlessness and brutality "; and advised that no person who coöperated with the Commission should be " invited to social functions, and no function given by them or in their honour should be attended."

This resolution was readily passed; but when Mr. Satyamurthi moved an addition to it providing that the Congress should lay down specific rules for disobeying prohibitory orders passed by the government against the boycotting of the Commission in the various provinces, warm opposition developed. Mr. Abdul Hamid Khan and Mr. Bashir Ahmed, M. L. C., opposed "binding the hands of Congressmen in other provinces"; and Mr. Harisarvettamarao hinted that Mr. Satyarmurthi had himself been guilty of being influenced by the Commissioner of Police against the boycott in Madras. This brought forth a vehement denial from Mr. Satyamurthi, who said that "the titular leader of Madras" had begged of him not to proclaim a boycott, since his (the leader's) imprisonment would ruin his trade; but that he himself had led a boycott procession under a shower of stones, and that his life was in danger during eleven days.

Dr. Pattabhi Sitaram and Mr. Govindachariar supported the addition, on the ground that "the Congress should give a clear lead to the people that they must disobey these orders of the Government, notwithstanding Section 144." After this rather bitter debate, the addition to the resolution was adopted but only by the narrow margin of 44 votes to 43.

On behalf of the Congress Committee of the United Provinces, Mr. J. Nehru also moved that "it is contrary to the spirit of the national struggle for freedom and derogatory to the nation's dignity for Congressmen to participate in any way in functions meant to consolidate the foreign rule and do honour to the alien rulers of India and their officials ''; and that '' the people in general and Congressmen in particular should therefore abstain from attending Government levees, durbars, and all other official and semi-official functions held by Government officials, or in their honour.''

In support of this motion, Mr. J. Nehru said that this indiscretion had grown from bad to worse and had become simply scandalous; that Congressmen should not even ''sign the viceroy's visitors' Book, because there could be no greater acknowledgment of British subjection than this sort of thing ''; and that '' any man who does that sort of thing should not be allowed to come within a thousand miles of the Congress.'' These remarks and the resolution precipitated what promised to be a lively debate; but before it was decided, the committee was obliged by the lateness of the hour to adjourn. When the motion was presented to the Congress by Seth Govindas, and seconded by Santosh Kumar Bose, it was unanimously adopted.

Before this last motion was offered, the committee adopted resolutions of sympathy for the families of five Bengal martyrs, who had died during the previous year, '' while undergoing incarceration without trial,'' and of admiration for six others who had suffered in various ways for their patriotism. These resolutions were offered by Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta, who also persuaded the committee to table a resolution of inquiry into a complaint made by Mr. Tyabali relating to the alleged misconduct of some of the Calcutta Volunteers. These, he said, numbered 2000, their work since the 20th of December had been exceedingly arduous, and there was small wonder if one or two out of so many had been derelict in their duty.

One other incident of some significance had occurred during this long session of the Subjects Committee. Pundit Nilakantha Biswanath Das offered a resolution providing for the separation of Orissa and Utkal into two separate provinces under the new constitution, and argued that the Oriya-speaking people of Utkal were entitled to this separate government. President Nehru ruled this resolution out of order; thereupon Mr. Das, accompanied by a half-dozen Utkal delegates, withdrew from the meeting in protest, and all the Utkal delegates to the Congress decided that the only honourable course open to them was to record their strong protest by absenting themselves from the remaining sessions of the Congress.

THE LIBERAL FEDERATION, DECEMBER 30-31

The secession of the Sikhs and Utkals from the Congress was followed by the departure of many delegates belonging to the National Liberal Federation, which held its eleventh annual meeting in Allahabad on December 30 and 31. About 200 delegates, many of them being prominent leaders of India, attended these meetings, the key-note of which was struck in the opening speech of Mr. C. Y. Chintamoni, chairman of the reception committee, who said: " Staunch in our loyalty to our ideal of Dominion self-government and firm in our conviction that constitutional agitation is the right political method in the circumstances of our country, we have refused to deviate from our chosen path and are determined as ever to serve the motherland in our own humble way. . . . . To us Dominion Status is not the first step, but the one and the only step." Sir Chiman Lal Setalvad, in his presidential address which followed Mr. Chintamoni's, reëmphasized this doctrine, but stressed also the belief that those who worked for Dominion Status and those who worked for Independence could not work together."

These " key-note speeches " were endorsed by such outstanding Liberal leaders as Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyer, Mr. G. A. Natesan, Mr. R. V. Mahajani, Mr. D. G. Dalvi, Mr. Gopinath Kunzru, Babu Radha Mohan, Sir Deva Prasad Sarvadhikari, and Sir Shankar Rao Chitnavis; and it was evident that the adoption of Dominion Status by all parties had nearly healed the breach caused by the secession of the Liberals from aiding the Congress because of the adoption by the Congress of the ideals of Independence and Non-coöperation. The Liberal leaders also denounced quite as frankly as others the blundering repressive policy of the British Government, and the constitution of the Simon Commission without Indian representation.

The resolutions adopted by the Federation at its second and concluding meeting, included the demand for Dominion Status, *immediately*: " any further delay or postponement is fraught with danger to the mutual relations of India and England "; a general approval of the Nehru Committee's draft of a constitution; " the imperative necessity of continuing the boycott of the Simon Commission in full vigor "; and an emphatic condemnation of " the police assaults committed in the name of peace and order which marked the reception accorded by the officials to the Simon Commission."

THE INDEPENDENCE LEAGUE, DECEMBER 31

While the Liberals at Allahabad were passing their resolutions, on December 31, the Independence League was holding another meeting in Calcutta with the object of clarifying their attitude towards Mr. Gandhi's resolutions. At the beginning of the meeting, a motion was offered by Mr. Sambamurthi, of Andhra, and seconded by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, that the League delegates to the Congress should be bound to vote against Dominion Status and to support Mr. S. C. Bose's amendment for Independence. Dr. Pattabhi Sitharamaya pleaded for honoring the Gandhi compromise, which had been arrived at by mutual agreement, and appealed to the Bengal delegates to permit Mr. S. C. Bose to vote for it. Mr. Sri Prakasa, of Benares, also urged adherence to the compromise, the support of which they had promised both to the president of the Congress, Motilal Nehru, and to their own president, Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar;

and suggested that, at least, the Independence delegates in the Congress should remain neutral, while Mr. Iyengar should be allowed to support the compromise.

Mr. Satyamurthi said that the country as a whole was not bound to follow an agreement between any two persons (Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Iyengar); that he had not agreed to the compromise; and that Mr. Iyengar was destined to lose the support of his obedient Tamil-Nadu. Mr. Iyengar, in reply, said that it was precisely Tamil-Nadu which had put him in his present dilemma; that he had agreed to the compromise only after consultation with Mr. Satyamurthi, Mr. Sarat Bose and other Independence leaders; and that there were constitutional objections to reopening discussion on an agreed resolution.

At the end of the debate, it was voted by 89 to 5 to send a deputation to persuade Mr. Gandhi to agree to a reconsideration in the Subjects Committee of the compromise resolution, and that if he declined to do so, the League delegates in the Congress should support Mr. S. C. Bose's amendment against any form of Dominion Status. A deputation of six outstanding leaders, namely, Messrs. Iyengar, Satyamurthi, Sambamurthi, Mehta, J. Nehru, and S. C. Bose, was appointed to make the attempt to persuade Mr. Gandhi and Motilal Nehru.

The All Parties Convention, December 31

While the Independence League was debating its future course of action, on the morning of December

31, the All-Parties Convention, which had now dwindled to about 200 members, reassembled in its seventh session for the discussion of communal rights. The special committee of the Convention had not assented, as has been seen, to the demand of the Bengal Hindus for a reservation of seats in the provincial and central legislatures. Mr. Jitendoralal Banerjee therefore moved that this reservation should be made on the basis of population. He argued that, because of the large Muslim majority, the Hindus would be unfairly represented in the legislatures, as had been the case in district and local boards. Hindus, he said, were opposed to communal representation anywhere; but if Muslim seats were to be reserved in certain provinces where Muslims were in the minority, then Hindu seats should be reserved in others where Hindus were in the minority.

Dr. Naresh Chandra Sen Gupta opposed the motion as being based on a principle that ran counter to nationalism. When Dr. Ansari put the motion to a vote, it was evident by the show of hands that it had been carried; but Dr. Ansari, before declaring the result, made an appeal to the Convention to reflect upon the grave consequences of the motion to the Convention itself and to the Nehru Report, and Mr. Banerjee responded to this appeal by agreeing to permit his motion to be postponed and, later in the meeting, to be withdrawn. He stipulated, however, that the record of withdrawal should be accompanied by the statement that his chief object had been to enter a protest of the Bengal Hindus against the light-hearted assurance given in their name at the Lucknow Conference, and also to show that Bengal's Hindus considered they had a legitimate grievance in the matter which, however, they were prepared not to press at this stage in the interest of communal harmony and reciprocal good-will.

The question of citizenship accorded to foreigners was next raised by Mr. S. N. Haji, who moved an amendment to the report of the sub-committee appointed to define the rights of citizenship. He opposed the Lucknow agreement to define the qualifications of citizenship in the constitution itself, and to deny to the future Indian Dominion Parliament the right, in its discretion, of granting or withholding citizenship to non-Indians. He therefore moved that the Parliament itself should prescribe the requisite qualifications for citizenship. This would enable the Parliament to act according to future circumstances, and permit it, for example, to retaliate against discriminating legislation adopted by the parliaments of the other Dominions. Again, non-Indians within India might need the protection of citizenship against their economic exploitation by a few rich men in control of the executive.

Dr. Naresh Sen-Gupta, a signer of the sub-committee's report, defended the constitutional definition of citizenship; but Mr. C. Vijayraghav Achariar vigorously supported Mr. Haji's motion on the ground that qualifications could be easily altered according to circumstances by act of parliament, whereas it would be difficult to change the constitution; that therefore the hands of the future parliament should not be tied in this important matter; and besides, the amendment did no injustice to foreigners, but simply said that their claim to citizenship should be determined by the future parliament. Under this reasoning, the amendment was unanimously voted.

The difficult, but fundamentally important question of the national language was next raised by Mr. Lalchand Jagtiani, who moved that it should be " Hindusthani, to be written in Roman characters." Dr. Kitchlew moved an amendment that " the language of the Commonwealth shall be Hindusthani which shall be written both in Nagri and in Urdu characters; the use of the English language shall be permitted." Mr. Jagtiani and Dr. Kitchlew opposed each other's motion, and they were both lost, leaving " Hindi or English " to be the national language of India.

A debate ensued between Dr. Naresh Sen-Gupta and Mr. C. B. Acharya, as to the desirability of giving to the Central Government the power to suspend or annul the executive and legislative acts of the provincial governments, with a view to the protection of " minority or any particular class of people," and to the settlement of controversies between provinces. But the amendments proposed by them to the Nehru Report were either defeated or withdrawn; and the

Convention, having accomplished the task imposed upon it and reported the results of its labors to the Congress, adjourned *sine die* with eager anticipations as to what the impending session of the Congress would bring forth. It authorized the Nehru Committee to reconvene the Convention when it deemed necessary; and it recorded its opinion that, except on points on which notes of dissent had been recorded at the instance of some parties, there was general agreement on the constitutional basis recommended in the Nehru Report.

The National Congress, December 31

When the Congress reassembled on December 31 at 2.00 P. M., it ratified the decisions of the Subjects Committee, first, to affiliate the London, New York, and Portuguese Goa branches of the Congress, and to give the Working Committee of the Congress power to investigate the Kobe branch and to affiliate it also, should it deem best; second, to develop through the All-India Congress Committee a foreign department for the forming of contacts with other peoples engaged in the struggle against imperialism; third, the holding of a " Pan-Asiatic Federation " (that is, a conference of popular leaders from India, China, Japan, Russia, Afghanistan, Tibet, etc.) in India, in 1930; fourth, to send a message of congratulation to the people of China; fifth, to send messages of sympathy to the people of Egypt, Syria, Palestine and Iraq, " in their struggle for emancipation from the grip of Western Imperialism ''; sixth, to authorize the Working Committee to appoint a representative to the second World Congress of the League against Imperialism; seventh, to repudiate the frontier protection pretended to be afforded by the army in India and the traditional policy of the British Government by means of that army to conquer other nations and keep India in subjection, and to assert India's friendship with all her neighbors; eighth, to boycott '' all foreign cloth in general and British goods in particular ''; ninth, to '' congratulate Shri Vallabhai Patel and the people of Bardoli on the great success achieved by them in their campaign of non-violent resistance to the enhancement of land revenue by the Government; and tenth, to advise all Indians, and especially Congressmen, to abstain from government levees, durbars, etc.

GANDHI'S COMPROMISE RESOLUTION

Mr. Gandhi, having finished his 24 hours of silence at 3.00 P. M., entered the Congress pandal when Mr. Rajkumar Chakravarthy of Bengal was reading a carefully prepared address in favor of the eighth resolution to boycott all foreign cloth and British goods. When the ten resolutions had been duly adopted, Mr. Gandhi arose (or rather, according to his custom, seated himself on an improvised chair on the rostrum) to move the adoption of his resolution on Dominion Status. Just as he was beginning, there was a temporary (and some thought a deliberately arranged) break-down of the sound-amplifiers, or " loud speakers," and his voice could be heard by only a few members of the vast audience. He therefore postponed his address until the defect could be remedied.

Meanwhile, Dr. Ansari, taking the place of Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar, whose name appeared on the agenda as the seconder of Mr. Gandhi's resolution,[24] advocated its adoption as " the best cure to solve the communal and political problems of the country." The resolution also, he argued, gave full liberty to carry on work for Independence; let the young men rally to a united stand against " the common enemy," and strive to achieve Dominion Status; should the Government fail to yield to their demand, the powerful weapon of non-coöperation would again be used. Here, he pleaded, was an adequate and honorable programme for the young men of the land as well as for their elders.

But the eloquence and prestige of Dr. Ansari availed little with the Independence group; for the appeal of the six Independence leaders to Mr. Gandhi and Motilal Nehru for a reconsideration of the compromise resolution in the Subjects Committee [25] had been declined. Hence, the decision of the Independence League to carry the fight into the Congress itself was acted upon. Accordingly, after Dr. Ansari's speech, and before Mr. Gandhi's (while the " loud speakers " were still being tinkered with), Mr. S. C. Bose read, in his stentorian voice, which was soon reënforced by the revivified " loud speakers," the amendment which he had circulated in the meeting of the Subjects Committee on the evening of the 30th.[26]

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[24] Mr. Iyengar was either not present in this session, or remained deliberately silent so as not to antagonize still further the Independence League.

[25] See page 148.

This amendment declared " complete independence to be the goal of the Indian people," and that " there can be no true freedom till the British connection is severed "; it accepted the Nehru Committee's solution of the communal problem; and approved the Nehru Report in general, but rejected " Dominion Status as the basis of the recommended constitution." In supporting the amendment, Mr. Bose spoke as a representative of " the newer school in the Congress," in view of " the cleavage, perhaps the fundamental cleavage " between it and the older school. As a signatory of the Nehru Report, he insisted that that report was not inconsistent with work for Independence; but as a spokesman of the Bengal delegates to the Congress of the Independence League, and especially of Young India, he demanded that Independence should be asserted unequivocally. Because of recent acts of aggression by the British government, the country expected the Congress " to take up a bold attitude which would fit in with an attitude of self-respect. Instead of giving a bold lead to the country, we find a resolution has been placed before us which in our opinion amounts, at least in some measure, to a lowering of the flag. We are not prepared to lower the flag for even a single day. Whether we win or lose in this House, does not matter so far as the young men of this country are concerned. They have accepted the responsibility of making India free. We revere our older leaders and love them. At the same time we want them to keep abreast of the times. But if our older leaders do not come to a compromise with us who may be deemed the Moderates among the Extremists, the breach between the young and the old schools will be irreparable. Thanks to the Youth Movement, a new consciousness has dawned upon the youth of India. They are no longer prepared to follow blindfolded any and every policy. They have realised that they are the heirs of the future, and it is for them to make India free. . . . . At this juncture, I do hope that the Congress will give a bold lead to the country. If unfortunately it does not, I am afraid that other organisations which are coming into existence and are likely to come into existence soon, will draw unto themselves the most enthusiastic and virile of our workers; and if this course is allowed to be followed, the Congress may go the same way as the Liberal Party in Great Britain. I do hope that the Congress will keep abreast of the times and recognise the new spirit and the new consciousness that have dawned upon the youth of this country.''

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[26] See page 131.

Following this appeal in behalf of Young India, the orator stressed the loss in international prestige, which would come from a failure to declare Independence, because the anti-imperialists of the whole world were expecting that stand. Such a declaration, too, would '' overcome the slave mentality '' of the Indian people, which is the fundamental cause of their political degradation. Another world war, also, he declared, is looming up, because of the wrongs in the Versailles Treaty, the combination of capitalist countries against Soviet Russia, the Asiatic situation, and the race for armaments. India should prepare herself by Independence against this terrible menace.

Having begun his speech with a profession of regret at the necessity of opposing '' our revered Mahatma Gandhi,'' Mr. Bose ended it with another profession of '' respect, admiration, adoration and love '' for him and the other older leaders; but insisted that the adoption of his amendment to Mr. Gandhi's resolution would mean respect for a great principle, and no disrespect to the elder statesmen. His address was greeted in many parts by loud applause; and it was followed by another fervent appeal from Mr. Satyamurthi for declaration of complete and immediate Independence.

Mr. Satyamurthi denounced the '' ruthless exploitation of the masses in India by the British during the last two centuries,'' and demanded that India's future connection with great Britain should be '' of her own free will as an independent nation, choosing her own foreign relations, choosing her own foreign friends, and rejecting her foreign enemies.'' He argued for the acceptance of the Nehru Report in general—especially its admirable solution of the communal problem; but asserted that its authors themselves admitted that most of its recommendations could be implied in a constitution based on Independence. His repudiation of Dominion Status he based on the indefiniteness of its meaning, its implied acceptance of '' the British conquest of India as a moral fact,'' its consequent surrender of '' the greatest sanction behind our demand for freedom,'' its making of India an outpost of British civilization in the East instead of its rightful destiny as the leader of Asia and as a homogeneous contributor to the world's culture, and because as '' a mere lawyer's phrase it will convey next to nothing to the masses of the people.'' ''What the people want,'' he concluded, '' is not a transference of power from one bureaucracy to another, from a white bureaucracy to a black or a brown bureaucracy, but . . . .''

At this point the time limit of fifteen minutes for seconding speeches—as against a half-hour for speeches on main resolutions—expired, and the president's bell caused Mr. Satyamurthi to come to a sudden stop. Loud cheering greeted him as he descended from the rostrum; but he was followed by Dr. Annie Besant, who spoke vigorously—though at times almost inaudibly—in favor of Dominion Status. Independence, she declared, meant isolation, and was a lower ideal than that of a Federation of Free Nations, which was the ideal of Dominion Status. Dominion Status, too, would make ‘‘ India free from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. India would have power over its own resources and control of its own affairs; there would be no power on earth that could make any law which would have the right to run in the free dominion of India, other than that of its own people. No taxes could be levied by Great Britain; the army and navy would be under India’s control.’’ Again, Independence could not be attained, nor preserved, by peaceful means; and India had no adequate violent means. Even Mr. Gandhi’s proposed civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes would lay the heaviest burden upon the poor, whose lands and cattle would be seized. Let us, then, she concluded, adopt the Nehru Report and proceed to secure Dominion Status by peaceful and constitutional means.

This preliminary opposition to Independence was followed by a speech and a series of resolutions presented by Mr. R. S. Nimbkar, of Bombay, who moved to reject the Nehru Report *in toto,* and to declare for ‘‘ complete National Independence based on political, economic and social equality, entirely free from British Imperialism.’’ The Nehru Report, he declared, " allows the bourgeoisie to compromise with British Imperialsm by establishing a so-called Dominion Status which involves the safeguarding of vested interests (land-owning, feudal, and capitalist), and sacrifices the interests of the masses "; perpetuates the tyrannical government and unchecked exploitation of the masses by princes in the Native States; safeguards the exploitation of India's human and material resources by foreign capital; guarantees titles to property acquired by questionable means, thus perpetuating the exploitation of the masses; guarantees the payment of all foreign State debts; places India's armed forces under the partial control of British officers; gives executive powers including that of veto to a Governor-General and Governors nominated by the King, thus depriving the Indian people of their sovereign rights.

As " a practical man," Mr. Nimbkar believed that " to achieve Independence is easier than to beg for Dominion Status—which means nothing—and which is not even a half-way house to Independence." The real struggle, as he saw it, was to achieve, not paper independence, but " freedom from British Imperialists, Indian Princes, Indian Landlords and Indian Capitalists, which are united today against the Indian Masses."

The socialistic, or communistic, demands of Mr. Nimbkar were seconded by Mr. Nazir Bux, but received no further support. Syed Majid Baksh advocated the attainment of Independence by

" gradual stages "; but neither this plan, nor Mr. Gandhi's campaign of non-violent non-coöperation, was acceptable to Mr. Lalchand A. Jagtiani, who advocated a program of such direct and indirect action as may be necessitated by " circumstances prevailing in the country at the juncture [that is, at the end of 1929]." In support of his motion, he argued that " the white Brahmins of England, residing thousands of miles away," could not be expected, out of the generosity of their hearts, to offer to us, the depressed classes of India, Dominion Status." On the other hand, he said, " I do not believe that the teeming millions of India would vote for Independence; for I hold that they hardly know what it is to have two meals a day." As for non-violent non-coöperation, does it mean the boycott of British law-courts by lawyers, of government-aided schools by students, of land-titles by title-holders? If so, it will prove as dismal a failure as in 1921-22. True, the non-payment of taxes in the Bardoli satyagraha succeeded; but it cost, during four or five months, about two lakhs of rupees. Are you prepared to pay this cost to Bardolise the whole country? Perhaps; but let us answer that question a year later. To adopt a non-coöperation programme now would be " a mere bluff."

Several other amendments or motions for or against the Nehru Report were presented by Babu Chamsundar Chakravarty, Mr. Bashir Ahmed. Swami Kumaramand, and Mr. Siraii. But the session of the Congress having lasted for five hours, it was decided to adjourn at seven o'clock, to meet again an hour and a quarter later. During this intermission, there was a very animated canvassing for votes among all the provincial delegations, the members of the Independence League being especially active in this work. When the evening session began at 8.30, delegates only were admitted to the pandal, while thousands of visitors surged around outside, eagerly awaiting the result of the debate and the voting. The Ajmer delegates were excluded from the meeting, as not having been regularly elected; and the 300 delegates from Utkal absented themselves as a protest against the decision of the Subjects Committee not to consider the creation of a separate province for the Oriya-speaking districts.

Mr. Gandhi's resolution was read at the beginning of the meeting, and was supported by Dr. Murari Lal of Cawnpore, Mr. Gobinda Ballav Panth, Pandit Gouri Sankar Misra, and Mr. Hari Sarvottam Rai; while the amendment of Sj. Subhas Chandra Bose for complete Independence was supported by Mr. Joglekar, Mr. Shiva Prasad Gupta, and Sj. Sarat Chandra Bose. Mr. Joglekar said that even though Gandhi's Dominion Status resolution was advocated by the leaders, it should not be adopted: "Pandit Motilal is great, Gandhiji is greater still, but India is greatest of all." Mr. Gupta added that the resolution was not solely the work of Gandhi; that it could not rally all Moderates and Loyalists to the

Congress flag, since these groups had never been with the nation, not even in 1920-21, when non-coöperation was at its zenith; and that to dream of the concession of Dominion Status was futile, since no nation had even granted freedom to another nation. Sj. Sarat Bose advocated Independence, since Indians would get nothing from the Britishers voluntarily, and they had far better go out for Independence immediately, instead of waiting a whole year: "One year is a long period in the history of the struggle for freedom; the cause of freedom cannot wait even for an hour."

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru again spoke in favor of Independence as against Dominion Status, and while expressing regret that he was obliged to oppose his father and Mr. Gandhi, declared that the issue was broad and clear and must be decided in favor of India's Independence, as against Dominion Status under the British Raj.

Gandhi had arrived at the pandal about 9.30, and he now arose, about an hour later, to close the debate. His first remarks were expressed in Hindi; but for the benefit of "Young Bengal," whom he particularly addressed, he made most of his speech in English. This speech was not a long one—about half an hour in all—and was chiefly an appeal to the Bengal delegates to dismiss from their minds "the bogey of Independence *versus* Dominion Status." There is no opposition between them, he said. "The architects of the Nehru Report are your own countrymen, appointed by you. There is no hand on the part of the Government in the framing of this document. . . . . It is this Report by which I ask you to stand for the time being.''

Explaining the origin of his '' compromise resolution,'' he asserted that it was not framed by himself only, for there were many heads behind it; that it was an attempt to placate all parties, and was the result of an agreement among the leaders of all parties; and that they were in honor bound to live up to it. '' If you have not got that sense of honour and if, giving a word of honour, you are not sure that it should be kept at any cost, then I say that you will not be able to make this nation free. . . . . Do not imagine for a moment that I am trying to snatch a vote from you. . . . . I would far rather suffer defeat at the hands of young men; but I am jealous for their honour. If you young men who are behind this amendment [that is, S. C. Bose's] understand the significance of the message I am delivering to you, you may say for the present that you have committed a blunder, but that you want to abide by that compromise [that is Gandhi's resolution] because your leaders have agreed to it. If you think it is not a matter of honour, if you think that the independence of the country will be lost if you accept my resolution, I invite you to throw it out by an overwhelming majority. But if you accept my resolution, please understand that it will be a matter of honour for you to work for it.''

Having appealed to their youthful sense of honor and fair play, he next struck the note of manly courage. " Why are you labouring under that inferiority complex that within a year we shall not be able to convince the British Parliament, or marshall our forces and summon to ourselves the strength that we need? Swaraj is my birthright, just as breathing through my lungs is my birthright. It must be as natural to you as your breath. Why are you so afraid? I have got full faith. If you will help me and follow the programme I have suggested, honestly and intelligently, I promise that Swaraj will come within one year. I want you to die a proper death. I want you to develop full courage and die with calculated courage. If you have got that courage, if you can stand with your breast bare before the bullet, then I promise you will get all you can possibly desire. Do not be frightened by the shadow of death. Do not be afraid of the long drawn out agony. I admit that it is a long drawn out process; but, in the present state of the country, when we cannot trust our brothers and sisters, our parents and party leaders, or anybody else; when we have no sense of honour, and when we cannot even allow our words to remain unaltered for 24 hours, do not talk of Independence! But if you will develop calm courage, honesty of purpose, and that determination which will refuse to accept *No* for an answer to your demand, then I promise you what the tallest among us can possibly desire."

After denouncing the sale of delegates' tickets and their increase in price, as the excitement grew, from one rupee to fifteen, he came to his peroration, as follows: "May God direct you in coming to your decision. I do not want you to decide the question because I am the mover of the resolution, or because Pandit Motilal is behind it. It is *you* who must decide, with your calm reasoning, but showing honour with it too."

At the close of Gandhi's speech, which was listened to with profound attention and deep sympathy, the various amendments, except that of S. C. Bose, were either withdrawn or voted down by a show of hands. Then Mr. Bose's amendment for Independence was submitted by President Nehru, amidst cheers and great excitement, to a formal vote by a division of the house. The division required an hour and a half, from 11.30 P. M. to a little after one the next morning. The vote was cast by the delegates in their respective provincial blocks, two tellers being appointed for each block, and Messrs. J. M. Sen Gupta, Ansari, Jawaharlal Nehru, Lala Giridharilal, Jamanlal Bazaz, and Abul Kalam Azad acting as supervisors. The questions having been raised, President Nehru ruled that delegates not wearing khaddar should not vote; that irregularity of election debarred all Ajmer delegates from voting; and that the Punjab delegates should be divided by Dr. Satyapal into those entitled, and those not entitled, to a vote.

The separate votes of the provinces were not announced; but at 1.00 A. M., the president announced that Mr. Bose's amendment for complete Independence had been lost by a vote of 973 to 1358, with 48 delegates not voting.

This announcement was greeted with shouts of "Gandhiji-ki-jai," by the victors, and "Shame, shame," by the vanquished. Most of the latter shouts came from the Bengal delegates, two-thirds of whom had voted for the amendment. During the voting, the Bengal delegates who voted against it were denounced as "traitors" and "betrayers," and so loud were these cries that President Nehru sternly rebuked the disorder and attempted intimidation.

After the defeat of Mr. Bose's amendment, Mr. Gandhi's resolution was put to a vote by show of hands and was carried by a large (but unannounced) majority. The meeting then adjourned, at half past one o'clock, Tuesday morning, until two o'clock on Tuesday afternoon. Despite the weariness of the delegates, the day was largely spent in informal discussion among them as to the significance of the stand that had been taken. Both sides agreed that it was an "epoch-making" one. The Dominion Status group were jubilant over their triumph in the Congress, and were confident that victory over the British Government would also be achieved. The Independence group pointed to what they called the "small majority" secured for Dominion Status as "a warning to the other section in the Congress and to the Government that India is thirsting for complete Independence and is determined to be free.''

These last were the words of Mr. Satyamurthi, who gave a statement to the press, in which he further said: ''The ominous significance of the fact that among the 3000 delegates present at the voting time, not more than two were found to vote for Dr. Besant's amendment which sought to omit all reference to Independence in the resolution, cannot be lost sight of. The Congress has *not* accepted Dominion Status. It will never do so, I am confident. . . . . The goal of the Congress, that is the object of its effort, will continue to be complete national Independence. . . . . Even in the impossible contingency of Dominion Status being granted, India's struggle for complete national Independence must not and will not cease. The resolution does not require it to cease.''

Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, the mover of the lost amendment, in his statement to the press declared: ''I consider the resolution as adopted by the Congress as a lowering of the flag which was hoisted at Madras. Unfortunately, the vote of the house was not a vote on the simple issue of Independence versus Dominion Status. There were many, probably several hundreds, who voted for the main resolution, not out of regard for the principle which it embodied, but out of regard for the personality of Mahatma Gandhi and Pundit Motilal Nehru. The appearance of Mahatma Gandhi on the scene has certainly complicated the issue. . . . Considering the fact that almost all the prominent leaders were actively against the amendment, I consider it to be a moral victory for the principle for which my party loyally stood that we should be able to secure as many as 973 votes.''

The Subjects Committee, January 1

Dominion Status having been decided upon as the next immediate gain, the pressing practical question remained, how to secure it. The Subjects Committee had decided, at its meeting on December 30, upon the programme of action which it would recommend to the Congress. Fortunately, at its meeting on the morning of January 1—so soon after the prolonged session of the Congress the night before—the Committee had but little business of importance to transact. In order to cut down what was regarded as the excessive number of delegates to the Congress, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru moved to reduce it from 6000 to 1000. He argued that democracy would not thereby be diminished, while various practical advantages would result. But the opposition to any change in the existing number proved too strong, and both his proposal and Mr. Iyengar's motion to reduce the number to 3000 were rejected. The necessity of raising more revenue for the year's campaign, however, induced the committee to adopt a proposal to increase each delegate's fee from one rupee to five. Four of these rupees, it was agreed, should be paid to the

"All-India Congress Committee," which was to carry on the work of the Congress after its adjournment, and one to the Reception Committee of the Congress at the next annual session.

An encouraging incident at this meeting of the Subjects Committee was the return of the seceding members from Utkal. Pandit Motilal Nehru gave them a cordial welcome and expressed the hope that the late unpleasantness would be forgotten. Pandit Nilkantha Das replied that the Utkal delegates had been guided in their action by the feelings of the people of Utkal, who still hoped that their province would be accorded in the new constitution an existence separate from Orissa.

The National Congress, January 1

On the afternoon of January 1, the Congress assembled for its last session. The Subjects Committee's proposal to increase the delegates' fee met with considerable opposition, but was finally adopted. A motion made by Mr. Monilal Kothari and seconded by Mr. Satyamurthi demanded the introduction of responsible government in the Indian States and urged their rulers to make declarations guaranteeing the elementary rights of citizenship, with a view to making India a homogeneous nation. This motion was also carried. In view of the expectation of the speedy arrival in Calcutta of the Simon Commission, which had kept out of the city during "National Week," Mr. Jumnadas Mehta moved a resolution for the continued boycott of it. He expressed his confidence that Bengal would welcome this resolution and would boycott the Simonites as determinedly as it had boycotted the Prince of Wales in 1921. This motion was also carried; but an amendment to boycott socially all who coöperate with the Simon Commission was lost.

THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION

The main business of the closing session of the Congress was to consider Mr. Gandhi's resolution providing a programme of work for achieving Dominion Status during 1929. This resolution included the prohibition of intoxicating drugs and drinks by means of legislation, the picketing of shops, and other suitable measures; the boycott of foreign cloth, by means of the production and use of handspun and hand-woven khaddar; the " Bardolising " of local grievances by a resort to non-violent noncoöperation; the uplift of women, and their due participation in national upbuilding; the removal of social evils, and especially untouchability; the strengthening of the National Congress by the enlistment of members and the enforcement of discipline; the devotion by members of legislatures, elected on the Congressional tickets, of the bulk of their time to such constructive tasks as shall be designated by the Congress Committee; and the enlistment of volunteers to engage in reconstruction work in villages and cities, in addition to what is already being done through the spinning-wheel and khaddar.

Mr. Gandhi in offering this resolution, or " programme of action," said that it was an integral part of the resolution adopted the previous night demanding Dominion Status; and that if it were worked out with iron determination Swaraj would be within the people's grasp. " We want you to take this resolution seriously," he said, " and not simply to accept it and then sleep over it, expecting the All-India Congress Committee, or the Working Committee, or the President, to work wonders. Neither of them possesses a magic wand. Only your own iron determination and work can bring Swaraj within your grasp. I would therefore beseech you not to accept the resolution, unless every one of you means seriously to carry out the programme and is determined to take the message of the Congress from door to door and work ceaselessly for the next twelve months. If you can do that, I promise that you will see before you an atmosphere totally different from the atmosphere of distrust and despondency that I see now in every one here."

Evidently the Mahatma knew well the psychology of his hearers; for in response to this challenge and promise, the Congress adopted his resolution by almost unanimity and received with hearty applause his further appeal to every Congressman to contribute monthly a generous share of his income (5 per cent was suggested) in order to finance the work before them. The Independence group acquiesced cheerfully, not to say enthusiastically—for they could not well do less—in the setting up of these " sanctions " for advancing the cause.

Mr. Iyengar seconded the resolution in the Congress, because he was convinced, he said, that it would help in the achievement of complete Independence. Sj. Subhas Chandra Bose stated in his interview with the Associated Press, after the Congress adjourned: " We [the Independence League] have been given a certain number of seats on the Working Committee and we, as a party, have decided to coöperate with the other members of the Working Committee in so far as it is possible without detriment to the principle for which we stand. If the majority in the Working Committee adopt a fighting programme, certainly they will have the fullest support from the younger section. Apart from this, we shall carry on with full vigour our propaganda in favour of complete Independence and shall endeavor to the best of our abilities to devise those sanctions without which no national demand can be enforced."

Mr. Satyamurthi, also, in his statement to the press, said: " It is a matter of some gratification to me that in the programme resolution of Mahatma Gandhi two of my amendments, namely, organisation of peasants and workers on an economic programme and 5 per cent levy on Congressmen's incomes, to be voluntary and not compulsory, were accepted by Mahatmaji. My third amendment, that is the boycott of British goods, was accepted by the Congress. . . . . The other resolutions, dealing with the foreign policy of the people of India, decisively show that the Indian National Congress has begun to think, speak and act in terms of complete national Indedependence. The question of Independence will very soon become an international question of first-class importance.''

ESTIMATES OF THE CONGRESS

In this atmosphere, highly pleasing to all, but not wholly so to any, the sessions of the Congress at Calcutta adjourned, late in the evening of January 1, 1929, to meet again in the following December at Lahore. Immediately after its adjournment, the extremists on both sides began to prophesy disaster. The Calcutta *Forward,* for example, in an editorial on January 6, declared; '' It was Mahatma Gandhi's promise to revive non-coöperation after 12 months, in case the British Parliament rejected the Nehru Committee's Report, that induced many advocates of Independence to side with Mahatmaji in the Congress. But it appears now that, so far as Mahatmaji himself is concerned, the ultimatum to the British Parliament need not be taken too seriously. He will be satisfied if the leaders of the British people make some ' definite, serious and sincere ' move to meet us within one year. . . . . The Anglo-Indian papers here are jubilant that Mahatma Gandhi has at least for the time being put a check on the Independence movement, and they are lustily patting him on the back and congratulating him on what they suppose to be the dawn of returning sense.''

The editor of *Forward* himself thought that Gandhi was moving towards a surrender of actual Dominion Status for a bare acknowledgment by the British Parliament of India's right to enjoy it. He quoted the *New Leader* (of London) as having '' sought to lull Indians into the belief that ' the situation that results from the adoption of Mr. Gandhi's resolution can only be met by Labour, if it is returned to power in June, by a prompt application of the Birmingham Declaration for Dominion Status.' '' India, however,'' he adds, '' knows Ramsay MacDonald too well to pin its faith on the Birmingham Declaration.''

Another strong advocate of Independence, Mr. Satyamurthi, was more optimistic of its future, so far as India was concerned, though somewhat pessimistic of Gandhi and Dominion Status. '' I am fully confident,'' he said in an interview with reporters, '' that by the time the Congress meets at Lahore in December the Congress will be united and determined to work for complete Independence, and nothing less or other. . . . . The Independence League will of course carry on its propaganda. It can never cease it, at least until the Congress itself becomes the biggest and strongest independence league in the country.''

At the other extreme, the *New Statesman* (also of London), in an article entitled '' Chaos in India,'' attacked Gandhi's resolution as "palpably inane," and said that his promise of Swaraj within a year was precisely what he promised repeatedly seven years ago. It was ludicrous then, and it is criminal now; for Gandhi has had overwhelming proof of the wildness of his idea, has seen his Hindu-Moslem entente break up, and has witnessed repeatedly the misery that results whenever Swarajists attempt to take him at his word. "This is not the first time in its history," the *New Statesman* admits, "that Congress has been saved from a definite split by the personal influence of Gandhi; but a split is inevitable." As between Moslem leaders on the one side and Nehrus and Iyengars on the other, this journal saw not even a faint outline of hope that in 1929, with or without the Simon Commission, advance can be made towards a pacific solution of the political problem. As for the social problems, it recognizes that at the Calcutta Congress "a social note has been struck with an unaccustomed sound," and that "Indian leaders acknowledge the truth of the principle (which, to do him justice, Gandhi has always known) that the roots of self-rule are not to be found in systems of government."

PRESIDENT NEHRU

The President of the Congress, Pandit Motilal Nehru, in an interview published in the Calcutta *Forward* on January 5, 1929, summed up its significance as follows: "Congress has simply laid down a programme of action for the whole country, of which all whom it may concern may take due notice. It is not necessary for us to deliver any ultimatum to the Government of India or the British Parliament. . . . . The session of the Congress is fraught with lessons both for the bureaucracy and the people. It has shown that we have arrived at a stage when a policy of drift is no longer safe for either side and the party which fails to profit by the lesson it has to learn is bound to come to grief. The Government must take a long forward stride immediately if a very grave situation is to be averted in the near future. The people must cease talking and take to active preparation to acquire the strength and the sanction to enforce their demand. By approving the All-Parties Committee Report the Congress has shown the right step for the Government to take and by adopting the programme formulated by Mahatma Gandhi it has shown to the people the right course to adopt. The future largely depends upon the response made by both sides. . . . .

" My point was that if Dominion Status was withheld up to the moment the people were prepared to enforce their terms to the fullest extent they would naturally prefer complete Independence and it would then be too late to offer them Dominion Status. . . . . My position on January 1, 1930, will be determined by the situation as I then find it. But whatever that situation may be there will, in my opinion, be ample scope for the necessary action within the

Congress without joining any particular group. There is no question of faith or no faith in Dominion Status. The question is whether there can be any faith in the promise of Britain to give Dominion Status to India. I have made no secret of the fact that I have not and never had any faith in that promise. For those like me who have no faith in the promise, the time limit means a period of preparation and organisation. For those who have faith in the promise, it means that they will be disillusioned if Dominion Status does not come before the 1st of January, 1930. The entire country will then be ready to march forward on the road to complete independence. . . . .

" As between the Government and the people, it [the Congress] was a complete success for the latter, as all have united in the demand for the immediate grant of Dominion Status. The differences that remain are on non-essentials and can easily be adjusted the moment there is a favourable gesture from the Government. In the absence of any such gesture I am confident that earnest work on the programme of Mahatma Gandhi during the year will remove all outstanding differences."

THE ALL INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE, JANUARY 2

Meanwhile, amidst this conflict of opinion as to the results and significance of the Calcutta Congress, its executive committee entered upon the work en-trusted to it. This committee is known as the All-India Congress Committee (the A. I. C. C.) and it, being also too large for effective work, constituted a smaller one known as the Working Committee. The A. I. C. C. held its first meeting in the Calcutta pandal on January 2, the day after the Congress adjourned. Its members included the prominent leaders of all parties, with Gandhi at their head and Motilal Nehru presiding. Its first task was to ensure a revenue. Jawaharlal moved that each provincial committee contribute to the national fund 10 per cent of its collections, with 100 rupees as the minimum. Sj. Kiran Sankar Ray advocated a fixed sum being assessed on each committee, the major provinces paying proportionately more. At the suggestion of Mr. Gandhi, it was decided to leave the amounts to the honor of each provincial committee, and to request payment before the end of February.

The Working Committee For 1929

Provision was then made for the decision of disputed elections to Congress and to its provincial committees, by the appointment of a panel representative of all the provinces, including Burma. Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar then proposed a list of nominees for the Working Committee which, he said, had been approved at a meeting that morning of the Independence League, also by Mr. Gandhi and Motilal Nehru. Mr. Nehru criticized the method by which " the slate '' had been made up, but heartily approved of the nominees, and they were duly appointed to the committee. They were fifteen in number, including ex-officio the chairman (President Nehru), two secretaries (J. Nehru and Dr. Ansari), and two treasurers (Jumnalal Bajaj and Shiva Prasad Gupta). These and the ten elected members are fairly representative of both the Independence and Dominion Status schools. Hinduism and Mohammedanism are both well provided for in the committee; and Mrs. Naidu, an ex-president of the Congress, is the distinguished representative of India's women.

Besides Mrs. Naidu, the ten elected members include Mahatma Gandhi, Abul Kalam Azad, Subhas Chandra Bose, Srinivasa Iyengar, Babu Rajendra Prasad, Sambamurthi, Sardar Sardul Singh, Madan Mohan Malaviya, and J. M. Sen Gupta. This is indeed a distinguished and many-sided galaxy of Indian leaders. But their task is most complex and difficult, as well as most momentous; and they will need all the political wisdom which they collectively possess to accomplish it. The eyes of the world are upon them; and not only the British, but all other peoples are wavering, as regards India and other '' backward '' lands, between two political philosophies.

The first of these was expressed by Lincoln the Democrat, who declared: '' There is no man so wise or so honest that he can be trusted to govern another man without that other man's consent; '' and by

Gladstone, the Liberal, who asserted: " It is liberty alone which fits men for liberty. This proposition, like every other in politics, has its bounds; but it is far safer than the counter doctrine, ' wait till they are fit.' " The " counter doctrine " was expressed by Curzon the Tory, who opined: " The Resolutions of India's National Congress are like the popping and fizzing of soda-water bottles. . . . . By environment, by heritage and by up-bringing, Indians are unequal to the responsibilities of high office [even] under British rule."

History's pages are awaiting the answer of India's leaders to this question, and will record impartially the story of their efforts, failures and successes. Meanwhile, they are not unmindful of Washington's and Franklin's belief, expressed in the poet's dictum:

> " Treason never succeeds; and for this reason:
> If it succeeds, who dares call it treason? "

The eyes of all the world are eagerly fixed on India in this political crisis. If her people and the British can solve their mutual problem by *peaceful* process, they will receive a heartfelt tribute of praise and gratitude from all the world, and will establish for posterity the greatest of historic precedents in favor of the peace-method as against the war-method of settling disputes between nations.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

An official account of the Indian National Congress of 1928 is promised for publication some time during the year 1929.

Meanwhile, this monograph has been written on the basis of its author's notes and the accounts which appeared from day to day during the sessions of the Convention and Congress in the daily press. The author acknowledges his indebtedness to President Motilal Nehru for his permission to attend the meetings of the two assemblies and their committees.

Two books have been found useful, namely:

"The Congress and the National Movement," Calcutta, 1928; a pamphlet of 100 pages, written from a Bengali standpoint, under the direction of the Reception Committee of the National Congress, and giving a historical sketch down to the eve of its 43rd session in Calcutta in December, 1928.

"All Parties Conference, 1928," Allahabad 1928; a pamphlet of 168 pages, published by the General Secretary of the All India Congress Committee, and giving an account of the appointment, work and report of the so-called Nehru Committee, on the constitution of a self-governing India.

The following daily newspapers published detailed concurrent accounts of the various meetings and verbatim reports of the speeches, resolutions, etc. It will be observed that the list includes newspapers of diverse points of view, from the radical to the reactionary.

The *Amrita Bazar Patrika,* Calcutta;
The *Basumati,* Calcutta;
The *Chronicle,* Bombay;
The *Englishman,* Calcutta;
The *Forward* (now the *Liberty*), Calcutta;
The *Hindu,* Madras;
The *Hindustan Times,* Delhi;
The *Leader,* Allahabad;
The *New India,* Madras;
The *News,* Rangoon;
The *Pioneer,* Allahabad;
The *Statesman,* Calcutta;
The *Times of India,* Bombay;
The *Tribune,* Lahore;
The *Young India,* Ahmedabad.

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